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HER SENATOR

A NOVEL



ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

AUTHOR OF

"MR. BARNES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

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HER SENATOR.

BOOK I.

WALL STREET IN 1873.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORD UNDER THE OCEAN.

It was the second day of April in the Year of Our Lord eighteen hundred and seventy-three. The newsboys were shouting extras telling of the loss of the steamship *Atlantic*, by which seven hundred passengers found a grave in the bosom of the ocean; a disaster that carried mourning into the homes of thousands—a calamity that even at this day has left scars of remembrance for lost ones on the hearts of those who loved them.

Sitting in his private office in Exchange Place, a business man occupied by his correspondence of the day, the voice of the newsboys dominating the buzz of the clerks in the outer office and coming to his ears: “Wreck of the *Atlantic*—seven hundred passengers unaccounted for!”—muttered nervously: “He cabled me he would leave about the 20th,” then drooped his head and sighed these curious words: “No such luck!”

A moment after Overhand Guernsey rang his office bell hurriedly, sent out for an extra, and looking it over snarled;

"Pish! they don't telegraph the names!"

With that he rapidly wrote a cable, addressed to the White Star Line, Liverpool, brief, pointed, and bearing life and death in its significance:

"Did Arthur M. Ellison and children sail on the *Atlantic*? Wire immediately."

This being dispatched he looked over in a faltering, hesitating, broken-hearted manner certain memoranda and accounts, and at last placing them carefully away in his private safe and securely locking them up, gave a sigh, apparently of relief, when they were out of sight.

A moment after, a bright, cheery voice broke into his meditations.

"Come to lunch, old fellow," cried Curtis Wynans, of the New York Stock Board. Then looking at the man before him Wynans, who was a dashing, sunshiny broker, said: "Why are you so silent and gloomy, Guernsey?" And his eye catching the extra that had dropped upon the floor, he whispered quietly, in a hushed voice: "No friends on board, I hope?"

To this the mind of the man he questioned answered: "NO SUCH LUCK!" but his tongue said: "Yes, I'm afraid—one of my dearest friends—and his family—Arthur Ellison—you know him? He left New York in '68 to live in France."

"A Wall Street man?"

"No! but still a lucky dabbler in stocks. A man of little business capacity, but very fortunate. He had a simple and blind faith in always buying the market at the foot of a panic, and the happy tact of always selling when he had a fair profit. You've heard of a fool for luck?" added Guernsey, almost bitterly.

"Yes, I'm a living example of it," remarked Wynans.

"I've sold the market short when everybody said it was going up—and look at the quotations! But come to lunch."

Together they strolled into the street, but curiously enough Overhand Guernsey did not gaze at the quotations, as he passed through the outer office. An act of devotion to the bulletin board he had not omitted for years, which produced some strange comments from his clerks.

"By Jove!" remarked one of the juniors. "Did you see that? The governor must be hit hard."

"By what—a woman or the market?"

"By neither," suggested the old bookkeeper. "I think he fears the loss of a friend—an intimate friend of former days—on the *Atlantic*."

This stopped any laugh; for despite the rush of business—despite the excitement, latent or apparent, that is always in the air of Wall Street—despite the unanimous bowing down to the golden calf that permeates the region of stocks, bonds, and insecurities, the tremendous loss of life on the great liner that should have been now at her pier in New York unloading her passengers, who had already become "things of the past" in the chilling waves and icy blasts of the North Atlantic, the recollection of faces they would never see again, the remembrance of voices their ears would never listen to—cast its gloom even over the worshippers in the Temple of Mammon.

Two minutes after Guernsey and Wynans were at the home of the gourmands of that day—Delmonico's downtown restaurant.

Here the news of the great shipwreck dominated the clatter of knives and forks, the buzz of the waiters, and subdued the smiles produced by the last *bon mot* of Travers or Jerome; even subordinating to its horror, speculators' thoughts of the market, which

was now presaging the panic of 1873, its quotations being feverish, with gold rising and stocks declining.

Amid the clatter of knives and forks, the buzz of conversation, and the hurried bolting of exquisite dishes by brokers too eager to note their taste or flavor, Guernsey and Wynans sat down to eat, though the former apparently had no appetite, playing with his oysters, but drinking feverishly, and once or twice wiping abstractedly with his napkin the clammy perspiration of nervous agitation from the palms of his unsteady hands.

"If you can forget your friend long enough to listen to me," whispered Wynans, "I may put you in the line of something good."

"What is it?" said the other, shortly.

"It's this: The Comstock mining stocks are very low in California. You remember that two years ago Crown Point went up from three dollars to three thousand dollars a share in a year."

"You should have told me that two years ago, before it rocketed," laughed Guernsey, nervously.

"Yes, but I've received a letter from an intimate friend of mine—you remember him—Packard, a level-headed fellow, who is now out there on a visit. He tells me that some day or other he thinks there may be a chance for a mine called the Consolidated Virginia, that is selling somewhere between thirty and forty dollars a share. You might make twenty points on gold on extreme fluctuations; but this stock may go up to hundreds, even thousands of dollars a share. Buy a little and lock it up. I have done so."

Here Guernsey astonished his friend by saying: "I will, if things go right with me."

"Why, there's nothing particular the matter, is there, except the loss of your friend?"

"Yes, that's it; I don't wish to speculate until I

know where he is. You'll excuse me—I hear another extra outside.”

With that Guernsey hurriedly dropped his knife and fork and bolted from the restaurant, leaving his companion gazing astonished after him and cogitating: “He's the first man I ever knew that let the death of a friend prevent his making money in stocks! What's the matter with him, anyway?”

The object of Wynans's speculation intercepted the newsboy, bought another extra, but, curiously, did not dare to read it on the street. He was afraid the news might cause him to show uncontrollable agitation.

In the security of his private office he opened the paper, gave a shrill, sudden, choking cry, and, gasping these astonishing words: “By Heavens! my luck has turned at last—he's dead!” sank overcome into a chair

To him the bookkeeper, coming in on some business five minutes after, picked up the paper, looked at it, and reading in the list of lost the name of Arthur M. Ellison, from Paris, glanced at the bowed head of his chief and muttered to himself: “Poor fellow! The blow is sudden; they were old, old friends!”

But ten minutes afterward Guernsey recovered, unlocked the door of his private safe, and pulled out the memoranda he had been gazing at in despair. A moment after carefully placing them in the blazing grate of his private office, he watched them burn, then gave a great sigh of relief, called his bookkeeper, and said: “Look over Ellison's accounts. Tell me if he has any balance left, or not. I am afraid his poor children are penniless. I see by this paper that Arthur left them behind him in Paris.”

For the dead and gone Ellison had been that fool of a man in business called the “trusting man,” and had left an absolute power of attorney with his old friend

Overhand Guernsey, and Guernsey had been speculating. Had Ellison returned alive, perchance the State's Prison might have looked Mr. Guernsey in the face; for, compelled by the exigencies of the market, he had been robbing his friend in Paris right and left for years.

Five minutes after Mr. Guernsey in the privacy of a Safe Deposit vault, looked over a box of papers marked "Arthur M. Ellison," and selecting a document in an envelope indorsed: "My Last Will and Testament," opened it, and reading it over smiled and murmured to himself: "Arthur was trusting to the last. I am his sole executor and guardian of his children, without bonds or trustees. This will save inquiries that would have been awkward." Then with a sudden revulsion of feeling he added: "But I'll do the right thing by his children;" though he qualified it a moment afterward by—"If the market turns!"

Coming out of the Safe Deposit building, with the superstition of a gambler he suddenly thought: "By Jove! this has been a lucky day. What was that mining stock Wynans spoke of? Oh, yes, Con. Virginia. I'll follow my luck."

A few minutes afterward he had telegraphed a San Francisco firm to buy for him five hundred shares of Consolidated Virginia.

That night a cable message arrived in Paris addressed to Mademoiselle Frontain, No. 24½ *Boulevard Mole's-herbes*. It announced the death of Mr. Ellison, and directed her to bring forthwith his two children, to whom she was acting the part half of nurse, half of governess, to America.

CHAPTER II.

"TWO HELPLESS ONES."

THREE weeks afterwards a French woman of honest, simple, bourgeois face led into the private office of Mr. Overhand Guernsey two beautiful little girls dressed in the extreme of French fashion, though clad in deep mourning. Their arrival had been expected, and a clerk had met them at the steamer.

"*Les Demoiselles Eve et Mathilde Ellison, Monsieur Guernsey,*" said the *bonne* with a salutation that indicated she was of the peasant class.

"Ah, my dears," remarked the executor and guardian, addressing the children, "come and give me a kiss."

But the elder astonished him with these words: "*Mon papa* told me never to kiss any gentleman but him;" and the younger irritated him by hiding her head in her sister's dress and sobbing: "*Papa ! Où est papa ? Aujourd'hui, les baisers de papa !*"

On this the French woman broke in, saying: "*La petite* does not understand, and Mademoiselle Eve is very *difficile*; she would kiss only her papa."

Then she went into a dissertation in broken but voluble English, which she had learned in the family of the American, to explain the dangers and discomforts of the voyage.

To this Guernsey listened, scarcely heeding her, delighted that the woman spoke sufficient English to avoid the necessity of an interpreter, which might have been inconvenient, for the market had *not* turned, and he had been pondering for three weeks how he should fulfill his stewardship to the dead man who had

trusted him, and had made up his mind that the only thing to do for the children of Arthur Ellison was—the best thing for himself; and that was to treat them as if they were paupers and had no financial claim upon him whatsoever.

“If I gave them a little, some one would say: ‘Why does he give at all? They must have some claim upon him.’ If I made a partial accounting, it might be questioned in the courts. This is no case for half measures.”

This resolve was easy to carry out from the peculiar circumstances of the affair.

Ellison had been a cotton broker in New Orleans and had married a beautiful Creole girl in that city. Fleeing from the plague of yellow fever, which had carried off all his wife’s near relatives, he had sought refuge in New York, bringing with him his spouse and his daughter Evelyn, at that time his only child. Three years after, having accumulated a few hundred thousand dollars by lucky speculation, Ellison had decided to leave business and pursue a life of leisure in the French capital, his temperament being more that of the artist than the business man.

In Paris, soon after the birth of his next child Mathilde, his wife, who had never recovered entirely from the slight attack of yellow fever she had contracted in New Orleans, died.

Being a man of sedentary habits and devoted to an amateur’s pursuit of art, Ellison, as far as Guernsey knew, had left but one intimate friend, himself, and no near relatives. The children were practically in his hands. Any letters from himself or documentary evidence of the dead man’s fortune had, so far as he could discover, gone to the bottom of the Atlantic with Ellison. Every other paper was in his (Guernsey’s) hands. He was free to act.

All this he had thought of often before, but he ran it over again in his head as the French woman chattered through her story. Then he turned to her and said: "From your words I suppose you will not be sorry to go back to France again."

"*Ciel!* Monsieur wishes me to return at once?" replied the French woman, her eyes lighting up at the thought of Paris.

"Yes!"

"With the children?"

"No, they must remain here."

"But they love me. What shall I do away from them in Paris?"

"Get married!"

"Married—without a dot? Monsieur is *un farceur*."

"Not at all," replied Guernsey. Then he went on to explain to the woman that her dead employer had left, by his will, the sum of five thousand francs to her for her devotion to his family. "Though Monsieur Ellison is, I am afraid, insolvent," he added.

"Insolvent! *Mon Dieu!* Then I get nothzing," muttered the French woman, tears coming into her eyes. "And I had *des espérances*."

"You will not be disappointed. I am prepared to advance the money to you and take the chance of obtaining it from his estate," returned Guernsey quietly; "as I think my dead friend would have wished at least this provision in his will carried out."

"But Monsieur always said he was rich."

"*Was* rich! You understand—ze—ze *bourse!*" cried the American, trying to give a Gallic roll of the eyes to emphasize his use of the French word.

"Aha, *les volleurs!*" cried the *bonne*.

"But I have here a ticket for you on a steamer leaving for France to-day, also a draft on Paris, unless

you would like it in gold, for the five thousand francs," continued the speculator.

"I would prefer it in gold. *Cinq mille francs. Que de bonheur!*" said the French woman eagerly, her eyes lighting up; for into her mind had just flown the recollection of the bright face of a jovial French garçon, a waiter, at one of the Paris cafés, who she knew would be delighted to take her with a five-thousand-franc dot for his wife.

Consequently within another hour, telling the children she was sure they would be happy with such a generous gentleman, and murmuring to herself "*Quelle veine!*" Mademoiselle Marie Frontain, escorted by one of Mr. Guernsey's clerks, was *en route* for a steamship that left for Europe within four hours after her arrival in New York.

Almost as the whisk of the bonne's skirts departing from the room grew faint in his ears, Guernsey rang a bell and said nervously to the clerk who answered it: "Has any one called to see me?"

"Nothing but the routine office business, sir."

"Very well, when the Reverend Mr. Mawley calls, show him in to me at once. I expect him."

Then the clerk having gone out, the guardian and executor turned his face toward his charges and attempted in an elephantine manner to amuse them; but the children looked at him astonished and did not respond to his efforts at entertainment; for Guernsey had forgotten how to amuse children, his only child, James Bertram Guernsey, was already a youth of twenty-one, and being a Yale man, had long since disdained all childish frivolities.

"I wish Jim were here," thought the father. "He's always a good hand with the girls, and perhaps he could come down to children."

Then looking at the two before him he muttered to

himself : "Good heavens! in a few years they will be very beautiful. If I keep them by me, some day some young men will ask them in marriage and perhaps suggest an accounting. Mawley should be coming soon."

His jaw has set as he thought this, for, with Mawley's arrival, Guernsey must burn his bridges behind him—every timber of them. After that discovery means not only the contempt of mankind, but probably the prison of the malefactor.

But gazing at the girls his purpose became fixed, especially as he noted the elder. Both were beautiful—very beautiful. The younger, Mathilde, was a child of four, with hazel, trusting eyes and wavy chestnut hair—eyes that had in them a look of expectancy as she murmured in childish voice, her little mouth drawing down in baby pout: "Papa! You told me, Eve, I should see *mon papa!* *Sœur chérie*, you said, *aujourd'hui, les baisers de papa.*"

To this the elder replied with a manner and seriousness that astonished the man gazing at her, for she was scarce ten years of age: "*Mignonnette, ton papa*"—and the tears came into her eyes—"will not come to you to-day." Then she turned and leading him aside whispered to Guernsey almost haughtily: "Monsieur, I have been compelled to deceive my little sister. She is very dear to me. I call her *Mignonnette* and she calls me *sœur chérie*. I had not the heart to tell her the truth. *Papa! Oh, mon papa!*"

Then the girl turned away her head and sobbed awful sobs for a child, for they were without tears, and Guernsey for one moment repented of the cruel thing that was in his mind to do, for the little maid was very beautiful now; but yet more lovely in promise. Her form was of course childish, but gave presage of exquisite grace. Her skin was fair with that ivory-like transparency peculiar to the most exquisite

blonde beauty; her eyes were blue, not perchance the trustful blue, but the brilliant sapphire. The sparkle of a budding intellect gave them piquancy, though they showed a mind that would in time perhaps be too strong for soft womanly beauty, did not her mobile features varying with every emotion make spiritual, her delicate face—a face that was saddened now; for the girl had evidently suffered with a precocity beyond her years for the loss of her dead father whose body the Atlantic had taken to its depths forever.

But even as Guernsey repented, what the girl said made him not *dare* to repent. She turned and spoke to him in a voice and manner beyond her years, whispering these words of awful import to his scheme: “I heard you tell Marie my father was insolvent. Isn’t that the word for being very poor? I have forgotten, monsieur, some of my English.”

“It is, my pet,” answered Guernsey with a choking voice, turning his head away, but giving a sudden start as Mademoiselle Eve replied:

“That is not true! Papa told me he was rich; he had dividends. He showed me letters from you with *dividends*!”

“Dividends!” snarled the guardian, “What does a child like you know about dividends?” Then he tried to be facetious, patting the little one on the head and saying: “What does Sissy know about dividends?”

“I know they are money,” answered the child precociously, “Money to spend—money to buy clothes with. This dress was bought by *dividends*!”

And looking at its graceful folds, the sombre crape bringing home her loss, the little one muttered: “I am dressed in black because papa is dead,” then suddenly cried: “Papa’s letter—the one he wrote to me from England!”

With this, producing from the bosom of her gown a

letter, the very handwriting of which sent a thrill of horror through Guernsey, who recognized the chirography of his dead friend, little Evelyn Ellison read in childish tones, with now and then a falter over some word more difficult than the rest, the following, that told her listener he must have no mercy to her, to save himself:

"MY DARLING DAUGHTER:

Papa leaves to-morrow morning to sail across the ocean from you. He sends many kisses both to you and little Mathilde. Give *Mignonette* many kisses for me, be good to her, and guard her as you always have, like a little mother—for God has taken yours away. If the chances of travel or the cruel ocean should never let papa see you again, papa will still know his little daughters are provided for. His old friend Mr. Guernsey has in his hands ample fortune for you belonging to your loving father, who kisses you a thousand times and will telegraph his little daughters from the other side of the Atlantic. With many kisses, once more,

Your doting papa,

ARTHUR M. ELLISON.

P.S.—Keep this letter and remember Overhand Guernsey's address, 64 Exchange Place, New York City."

"Read it yourself," said the little one holding the letter trustfully towards him. "You are Mr. Guernsey; you know papa was rich."

"*Was* rich, my child," said the speculator taking the letter from her hand, the characters of which seemed to him his condemnation and the end of all his scheme. "*Was* rich. Don't get foolish ideas into your little head," and he patted the little girl's curls; then suddenly tossed the paper into the burning grate.

With a cry the child sprang forward trying to catch it with her delicate hands; but the flames driving her from it, she sobbed: "Papa's last words! What he told me to keep! All I had to love him by—till I see him in Heaven!" Then clenching her little hands, and

darting flashes of fire from her blue eyes upon this thief of her birthright and destroyer of her father's message of farewell she cried, "*Vous êtes un méchant !*" and stamped her little feet and muttered, "*Vilain ! Misérable !*"

At this moment a clerk announced the Reverend Mr. Jonas Mawley.

"Aha! my dear Mr. Guernsey," said a voice that would have been jovial had it not been wheedling, and a fat-faced, broad-chested, well-fed, unctuous gentleman in clerical black was shown in.

"Ah, my *dear* Mr. Guernsey!" And in another second two flabby hands have seized the speculator's digits and have cuddled, petted and let them go caressingly as Mawley runs on; "I was delighted to get your letter. I said to Mrs. Mawley, 'This means a subscription for the Home.' It is from Guernsey the capitalist; Guernsey whose name is great in finance, but greater in the church."

"I haven't been to church for five years," answered the Wall street man shortly.

"No, but you'll subscribe just the same; and you'll go—I know you mean to go to church some day." Here the Reverend Mawley put his hat upon the table, seated himself coolly and continued: "I won't go without a subscription! I know that's why you sent for me—you dear old capitalist."

"What! during this financial upheaval?"

"How will the Home, how will the orphans live? Children will eat, children must be fed, even if there are financial disturbances. Ah! children here!—come darlings—How I love children!"

With that, reaching out one flabby hand, the Reverend Jonas, despite a little cry, seized upon the petite Mathilde and sat her on his lap giving her two oily kisses.

"Don't 'ou do it—don't 'ou kiss me—dose kisses are papa's!" screamed the child.

"I always kiss children," guffawed the Reverend Jonas. "It is a part of my ministerial duties."

"Mathilde does not like strangers," said the elder girl coldly, and without apology lifted her sister from the reverend gentleman's lap. Then she looked him over and said with the wondrous insight of childish eyes: "You don't look like a minister!"

At which the Rev. Jonas Mawley grinned sardonically and muttered: "This ungodly girl has evidently been brought up among people who are not acquainted with the church." But all the same he writhed at the child's remark, which had struck very close to his flabby yet fishy heart, for the Reverend Jonas had dubbed himself reverend for charitable purposes, never having been ordained by the Church of God, though possibly he might have received his orders from the church of the devil. Charity and godliness did not belong to him, neither did the garb of the Church nor the right to preach Christ crucified—all had been assumed as part of his business as philanthropist and head of the Shepherd's Fold. Therefore his eyes were not pleasant as he turned them upon Mlle. Evelyn Ellison, who, being a stout-hearted little lady, gave the Rev. Jonas a haughty flash in return—one that would, perchance, cost her dear in the near future.

Into this scene Mr. Guernsey cuts, remarking: "Notwithstanding I didn't send for you with the idea of subscribing to your Home, still, Mr. Mawley, I wished to see you on a matter of business which involves a little money."

"Ah! Money!"

"But only a *little* money."

"Oh!"

Then taking him aside Guernsey continued in an

undertone: "These two children are daughters of an unfortunate speculator who died a pauper."

"They are very well dressed," answered Mr. Mawley, noting the exquisite garments that clothed the two children. "That crape is of the richest—four dollars a yard if it's a York shilling. Those stockings are real silk—at least three dollars a pair."

"Yes; he was a man who lived *rich* to die *poor*, as a good many of us do in Wall street. I knew him at one time quite well," answered the guardian, "and as no one else can do anything for them, and as I can do but little, I have sent for you in order to put them in your Fold."

"Aha! The Shepherd's Fold!" and the eyes of Mr. Mawley gleamed.

"I can afford to pay you one hundred dollars a year for each one of them. It is entirely a charity. Will you take them?" muttered the financier, his eyes upon the floor.

"Won't I?" said the Rev. Mr. Mawley, his face lighting up. "A hundred dollars a year for *each*? God bless your noble heart, you philanthropist!"

Then had he not turned away suddenly with perhaps a little shudder, for his conscience was smiting him, hard and strong, Guernsey might perchance have received a kiss of peace from the Rev. Jonas.

"I suppose, of course, the clothes the children have on and all their other belongings go with them?" asked Mawley eagerly.

"Certainly."

"What have they got?"

"I don't know. Their two trunks of clothing have just come from Paris with them."

"Ah! What they wear is very fine. Too fine altogether for my home. We have a uniform there. It is not well for little girls to think they are rich when

they are poor, and be educated to the lusts of the flesh and superfine raiment," remarked Jonas meditatively, for at this moment he was calculating how much the beautiful French dresses of the little girls would bring in cash of the United States, that Evelyn's silk stockings and Paris boots could be turned into dollars, and that perchance the trunks of these children contained a few ornaments even unto jewels. Then his eyes grew downcast as he cogitated: "Undoubtedly Guernsey, who is a sharp fellow, has gathered in the jewelry. Perhaps it is the proceeds of this he is giving me."

But Guernsey had not thought of jewelry. He was not a *small* thief, he would not rob the children of any little knick-knacks that might be theirs. He had a soul above such petty meannesses.

He would simply swindle them out of their birth-right, their place in the world, their chance of being happy, yea perhaps even good women, but no *small* thieving for Overhand Guernsey, the director in banks and stockholder in big companies.

Mawley was of different mould. He would confiscate a baby's jewelry and its little body likewise.

"Then the matter is arranged," muttered the executor. Next ringing, he ordered a carriage for Mr. Mawley and added: "You will excuse me now, I am very busy," for he wanted to get his victims out of his sight.

"Very well," replied the Reverend Jonas; "the two hundred dollars in advance?"

"Certainly!" returned Guernsey, and sat down to write a check.

As he did so, Mawley advanced authoritatively to the little girls and said: "My pets, come with me!"

Something in his eyes seemed to inspire the children with distrust. The younger fled to the corner of the

room with a little cry, the elder turned and said haughtily but politely: "I shall not go with you, Monsieur!"

"This must be cut short!" The speculator handed his check to Mr. Mawley and remarked to the girls. "As your guardian I have placed you at school with this gentleman. You must be obedient to him, be good children, learn your lessons and do as he tells you." Then he said soothingly, "Evelyn dear, here are two nice dollar bills. Mr. Mawley will take you both to lunch. You shall pay for some bonbons with them."

"Bonbons," cried the four year old. "Bonbons, you are a goo-goo man! Evie, bonbons!"

Here to Guernsey's embarrassment, Mademoiselle Evie remarked haughtily, "I need not trouble you, *Monsieur*; *mon cher papa* left me pocket money when he kissed me adieu," and she produced a handsome silver-mounted monogrammed *porte-monnaie*. Mawley's gloating eyes noted that it was well filled with golden twenty franc pieces as the little lady added in formal voice and demoiselle dignity, "We will accompany you to a restaurant, *Monsieur*, since Mignonnette wants bonbons, and I am hungry."

"I'll take your two dollars for future bonbons. Eh, philanthropist?" laughed Mawley, and with that the flabby autocrat of "The Shepherd's Fold" departed with his little charges, leaving Guernsey alone with a conscience that was not altogether dead within him, and produced almost immediately, an astonishing surprise for the Reverend Mr. Mawley.

The office door had scarcely closed, the financier had sunk into a chair and clasped his head wearily with his hands, when suddenly something seemed to arouse him to instantaneous—tremendous action.

Perchance it was a faint cry from the little lady of

the *porte-monnaie*, perchance it was the scream of his conscience. He sprang up, threw open his office door, flew into the hall, seized Mawley by the throat and dragged him back into his office. "You infernal scoundrel," he hissed, "if I ever hear of your laying a hand upon one of those children, I'll break every bone in your cursed body!"

"I—I was only taking the pocket-book from Evie to pay for the lunch. She is a very obstinate child," stammered the astounded Jonas. "The hand of chastisement——"

"Very well, only don't forget what I have said to you. If I ever hear of the hand of chastisement falling upon these two children, my hand shall fall upon you. Remember that!"

"I will remember," said the Master of The Shepherd's Fold. "I will remember, dear Mr. Guernsey, as long as you do not forget to send me the two hundred dollars yearly."

With this he departed, and the financier, anxious to get the matter out of his mind, devoted himself to his letters and telegrams. One of these was from his son at college, and read:

"DEAR POP:—Telegraph me five hundred instantly. You cannot imagine how much it costs to be a Yale man.

JIM."

"My noble boy!" said the father; "a rare *harum-scarum*, dashing, boy-will-be-boy kind of a boy," and telegraphed the money.

Then trying to keep other people's children out of his head he busied himself in his speculations, but the market did not turn, and day by day grew more disastrous to his fortunes.

So in the great panic of the succeeding September, among the list of those gone to the wall, busted, ruined by the fall of Northern Pacific,

Western Union, real estate, and everything else, whose speculative value had been boomed upwards and upwards, higher and higher since the end of the war, was the name of Overhand Guernsey.

The only thing left to him in the world was the five hundred shares of Consolidated Virginia, that none of his creditors knew he owned, the stock being in the name of a trustee.

With these shares in his possession, Guernsey left New York and betook himself to the West; and the stock market being vivacious in California, wrestled with mining speculation in San Francisco until in 1875 the great boom in Consolidated Virginia took place.

Being of a double or nothing nature, this gentleman bought more stock in the Bonanza Mines, and in the course of that year found himself about five hundred thousand dollars to the good.

Then having grown cautious in speculation, with a portion of this money he purchased, in one of the territories touching on the Rocky Mountains, a large cattle range, and located himself thereon, building a ranch house and making for himself a summer home.

During these years Guernsey had said to himself whenever he had thought about the matter, which had been seldom: "If the market turns, I will do something for the children."

One day it suddenly flashed upon him he had forgotten to send Mawley the stipend agreed upon, and chancing to be in New York he thought he would visit The Shepherd's Fold to see how well the two helpless ones had fared in the grip of the philanthropist.

CHAPTER III.

THE SHEPHERD'S FOLD.

ON the same day that Mr. Overhand Guernsey's conscience came into prominence once more in regard to the children of the dead man who had trusted him, on the outskirts of rapidly-growing New York, there stood a two-story house in the midst of a tumble-down, decayed, yet spacious, garden. Immediately at its back ran a newly-opened street without sidewalk or paving. Conspicuously above its entrance was inscribed: "The Shepherd's Fold."

Within it lived the Rev. Jonas Mawley and his unhappy charges, the flotsam and jetsam of a great city, whom he had gathered in to enable him to obtain State funds, and permit him to put upon his Board of Directors the names of men high in the Church, strong in philanthropy, and potent in affairs; but such busy men that no one of them could give personal attention or supervision to the institution; men who as a committee visited it once a year *pro forma* for a few minutes, and who could not conceive of a creature base enough to use philanthropy as a profession by which to fatten his flabby body on food literally torn from the despairing mouths of suffering yet helpless childhood.

It was growing towards the evening of this day, when to the sound of a bell in a large apartment within this house, there marched in from the school-room in precise order, two by two—for the Reverend Mr. Mawley was a stickler as to school etiquette—most of the children of the institution.

First the younger ones, some of them scarce old enough or strong enough to toddle in, then children of

gradually increasing years, until the last who entered was a girl of seventeen, though her dress was that of a child also, for they all wore the uniform of the institution, the girls being in gowns of neutral color, cheap material and a scant cut that showed a large amount of tissuey white stockings upon legs that grew gradually thinner according to the length of time their owner had been in the institution ; the only robust pair belonging to a girl of fourteen who had been just recruited from the Bowery where morality was scarce but provisions at times plentiful. These white stockings ended in feet shod in flimsy slippers.

Ranging themselves on the sides of the long, bare table without a cloth, each sat upon the wooden form in front of her own plate and cup. The plate had a little piece of bread upon it, the cup contained milk and water, chiefly water, as one cup of condensed milk only was used for each meal in the institution. This time, something like twenty children clustering about the board, twenty cups of lukewarm water had been added to drown the milk. But unappetizing as this fare was, their hungry stomachs yearned for it, their hungry eyes devoured it, their eager hands were stretched toward it. Every little one wished that it were more!

Suddenly the eldest girl, with a faint exclamation of horror, rushed at a toddler of five, crying: "Sallie, don't dare to eat until Mr. Mawley has said grace!" For the little one had suddenly fallen upon her piece of bread and was devouring it with a hungry, wolfish expression on her pale yet pretty face.

"Not a mouthful, please—not a mouthful—until after grace!" said the girl in charge in an awe-struck tone; for the Shepherd was wont to hold her responsible for the shortcomings in regard to the discipline or deportment of the flock if he was away; and Mr. Mawley be-

lieved with Solomon, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," as Annie Graham, who was trying to keep little Sallie's impatient teeth from her bread, very well knew and understood.

"Oh, quit yer foolin', and let her eat her grub," cried the fresh voice of Molly, the new girl, who had just been rescued from the slums and plenty of the Bowery, and placed in the famishing goodness of The Shepherd's Fold. Then, to the dismay of the others, this new import, whose spirit had not yet been crushed by hard fare and stern discipline, scoffed: "Here the old bloke comes!"

With this a hush fell upon the assembly. Annie sprang quickly to her place, and every eye was turned upon the entrance, over which, in hideous mockery and cruel sarcasm, was placarded the motto: "Feed my lambs!"

Beneath this inscription came in the Rev. Jonas Mawley, perchance a little more plump and a little more oily than the day, three years before, when he had taken into his hands the two little waifs from Paris. As he entered, his smooth voice said in complaisant tones: "Restrain your appetites, my pets, until after grace."

Then, standing at the head of the table, he commanded shortly, with the air of a pedagogue: "Stand up!"

And the children all rose and recited in unison: "We thank thee, Heavenly Father, for the bounteous and luxurious meal our good guardian, Dr. Mawley, has prepared for us."

With a soft wave of the hand the philanthropist remarked: "All may partake!" And so they did—like ravening wolves, not like little children.

"Mattie!" Mawley's voice was imperative.

Every child awed by the Shepherd's mighty tones, paused and looked at him—but one; this one faltered: "My name isn't Mattie; it's Mathilde!"

"It's what I chose to call you!" answered Mr. Mawley, savagely. Then he continued, rolling his fishy orbs upon the little girl who had not seated herself and was standing with wistful eyes and little lips twisted with disappointed appetite: "Mathilde—I mean Mattie, why did you not say grace?"

"Because I ain't a going to have anything to eat," said the child solemnly, pointing to her empty plate and empty cup.

"Ha, ha! You have been disobedient, insubordinate. You have not learned your lessons well!" remarked the man of grace, throwing his eyes once more upon the youngest child of the dead Ellison, whose pouting mouth is now thin and drawn, and no longer chubby and infantile, whose eyes are large, though there is no smile in them, and the little figure which has increased only in height, has no more the rounded outlines of a well nurtured growth—but is a veritable ghost of childhood.

"My—*sœur chérie*—my sister!" murmured the little one.

"Your sister has gone for medicine for the sick child below:—She couldn't fill your naughty stomach for you—could she, you little pampered thing!" sneered Mawley. Then he uttered in awful tone: "Stop whimpering!" for Mathilde has sent into the air a faint wail.

Next, perchance to get the child's pleading eyes from looking into his, the shepherd picked her up, gave her a savage shake and stood her in a corner.

Then turning, he said: "Annie!" and as the oldest of the flock approached him, a wary readiness in her demeanor to dodge any swinging slap that might come upon her unawares, remarked: "I leave you in charge. Be careful! You know me. I can be severe as well as kind. Mattie is to eat *nothing*! I expect the Com-

mittee this afternoon to make an inspection. Let all the children finish their supper quickly. I don't wish the Committee to see them eat."

With this, motioning Annie to his place at the head of the table, the Rev. Jonas Mawley, attracted by the pleasant odors of a bounteous supper that awaits him below, departs from the room, and restraint goes with him. Mollie, the waif from the Bowery, cries sardonically: "Yes, if the Committee saw this starve, it would be a give-away! Why, a Baxter Street all-night house would turn up its nose at such a meal as this."

"Silence, Mollie," says Annie pathetically. Then she utters sneeringly: "Remember, you are but two days out of the gutter!" For even in this home of misery, the jealousy and pride of petty humanity had not been altogether starved out of it. These vices can subsist upon the smallest rations.

"And you bet I'm going back to the gutter again the first chance I get," answered the recalcitrant Mollie.

Upon this the shrill voice of the little tot Sallie comes in baby tones pleadingly: "My bread's all gone and I'm so hungry yet."

To which the tough creature from the Bowery remarks: "So's mine, and I'm empty as a dance-house after it's been pulled." Then she goes on in a voice of such stridency that it makes Annie shudder: "They call this the infant's home," and cries out these hideous words, "Say! Has any more infants died since last night?"

"Hush, Mollie, be careful—Mr. Mawley——" gasps the affrighted one in charge.

But here a voice comes to them that makes Annie and all the rest start. It is from little Mathilde, who falters, turning eyes big with suffering upon them: "Something to eat—to keep me from dying!"

Even in its misery, even in its hunger, even despite its dread of Mawley, childhood, generous childhood, would give her from its insufficiency.

"I tarn't—I've bolted mine," sobs little Sallie.

"And I've bolted mine, too; but here's Annie's," cries the Bowery importation, seizing the elder girl's morsel.

But before Mollie can be generous with Annie's food, there is a whisk of short calico skirts and a child of strangely tragic demeanor, with flashing eyes and burning cheeks comes running in and whispers: "My sister—Mathilde—for you, *Mignonnette!*—for you!" And Mathilde is in the land of plenty.

"Why—it's—it's—*cake!*" she cries, her brown eyes big with astonishment, as she crunches her white teeth greedily upon what has been given her. "Oh, my!—*sœur chérie*—you have brought me—*pie!*" she murmurs, and bolts another piece.

"Great Five Points!" screams the Bowery girl, "if French Eva isn't giving her sister *sweet* things. Where did you get 'em? Did you hook 'em when you went out for the medicine? Oh, Ginger! there's enough to go round!"

"There's only enough for the little ones," answers Evelyn Ellison. "*Viens ici, pauvre Sally.*" And the girl calls the blue-eyed waif to her and gives her pie also, as well as some endearing Paris phrases, the use of which has gained for her the soubriquet by which Mollie of the Bowery has addressed her.

This nick-name is not without reason; for Evelyn's manner has still some of the Gallic grace the little maid had brought with her from Paris. Clad though she is in cheap calico, its short skirts giving her an apparent ungainly length of limb, there is a certain daintiness about her. Her dress has no spot or stain upon it, her stockings white, after the fashion of that day are

like snow, her hair long, waving and sunny, floats about her like a halo of gold, confined by a little blue ribbon—God knows how she got it! Above all this the girl has an air of distinction, perchance even a certain amount of *chic* about her, notwithstanding her surroundings have brought upon her face precocity and unnatural sadness. Her great blue eyes have those same perpetual welling tears behind them that have made the picture of Beatrice Cenci immortal, in its unearthly yet sublimely beautiful despair. Her poses, though crude, give promise of a growing grace that even the privations of these last years have not effaced; but each of them is dominated by an astonishing self-command, one born of constant self-repression, for this girl's life for years has been one continual struggle to take sorrow from off her little sister—unto herself.

Even as she speaks the last words, her French vivacity of movement comes to her, for Evelyn is compelled to defend the two little ones from the hands of older children seeking to seize their morsels of tempting food—food that has sweetness in it—food that makes the mouths of Mawley's half-starved protégés water with longing.

"There is no more!" Eve says at last. "You are hungry—I am hungry, we are all hungry, but it was for Mignonnette, my sister and *la petite* Sallie. *That's why I did it!*"

"Did what?" gasps Annie, fearing the delinquency of the other may fall upon her.

"Never you mind what,—I DID IT!" answers the girl. Then she murmurs: "*Ciel! J'ai faim.* Have you no bread and milk for me?"

"No, I—I ate yours," says Annie falteringly.

With this the girl puts her hands up to her pale face and mutters a subdued "*Misérable!* how could you!—when—when I have had nothing?" leaning against

the table weak from hunger and disappointment.

"Why I—I supposed of course you had filled your own stomach with pie and cake before you brought it to any one else?" stammers Annie.

"*You* would!" answers the other.

But here she utters a scream of amazement, for Bowery Mollie with a sudden howl of rage has cried: "You nasty thieving glutton!" and has fallen upon Annie hand and foot. And the two girls combat with one another, Annie after the feminine manner, with teeth and nails, and the other after the more scientific pugilistic methods she has seen in vogue at surreptitious visits to The. Allen's and Harry Hill's.

Being less famished as well as more scientific, Mollie is getting the best of it, when into the scene strides Mawley, an awful look in his eye.

"What is this? Fighting! Unchristian conduct!" he ejaculates, and boxes Annie and Mollie around the room to their places; then commands sternly, "Come to position!"

At his word, the children scramble to their places at the table—all save Evelyn, who stands apart holding her sister's hand, as the philanthropist, in severe voice, remarks philosophically: "This insubordination all comes from over-eating. It makes you bilious, and biliousness is the root of all evil. Half rations for the rest of the week!"

This speech is effective—hellishly effective!

A sigh that is half moan comes to him from the helpless ones standing around the table. And Annie, who had been made a sycophant and coward through years of continued repression, bursts forth: "It wasn't us, sir! It was Mattie and French Eva!"

"Aha, Mattie!" remarks the Shepherd, and turns fishy eyes upon the little girl. "Mattie, the naughty gourmand, the sulky child!" Then suddenly he gives

a start of horror and ejaculates: "God bless my soul! Mattie looks *fatter*;" next throwing investigating eyes upon the floor, cries out: "Crumbs! You have been eating!" As if this was the most horrible crime in childhood's decalogue.

"I couldn't help it, 'deed I couldn't, sir!" shudders Annie, who fears she has brought condemnation upon herself.

But at this moment a matron, who would be comely were she not severe in expression, enters the room. It is Mrs. Patience Mawley, the wife of the Shepherd, who remarks to him excitedly, "Jonas!"

And he turns and whispers, "My angel!" kissing her very tenderly.

But she breaks out eagerly: "I want Annie instantly. That sick child below has got the fever."

"The fever! when I expect an inspection from the committee to-day," moans the Reverend Jonas; then mutters threateningly under his voice, "Wait until she gets well!"

But his wife interjects, "If she is to get well I must send Annie for the doctor."

"Then let it be the *usual* one; you understand--I don't like strange doctors; they sometimes make hideous mistakes," grumbles the Shepherd.

His spouse echoes his idea, saying: "Yes, one actually said a child here died from lack of proper nourishment."

"Couldn't tell the difference between starvation and measles," whines the Reverend Jonas.

"But I will send for the old one, my love," whispers his spouse; "do not fear. And the newsboys are down stairs."

"Oh, the newsboys! Ah, yes!" murmurs Mawley placidly. "The two *fat* ones I selected to show to the committee to-day." Then he commands, "Annie, send the

boys up! After that, quick as you can, to the doctor's."

With a hurried and timid "Yes, sir," Annie Graham slips from the room, anxious to get away from the presence of this man, who is her dread by day and her horror by night, for she dreams of Mr. Mawley's punishments; even in her sleep, making night hideous to her unfortunate companion by her wild cries for mercy as she tosses upon her pallet bed.

A moment after, two fat, round, chubby-faced Arabs of the street stride complacently in, with bundles of evening papers under their arms, and look about them with the unaffected complacency produced by a childhood whose rugged life upon the streets has given them the self-confidence of manhood—aye, even more, the cheek of the newsboy.

"Say, boss," says Jakie, who is number one of the duo, "what do you want of us? Have a paper?" Then he raises up his voice in strident cry: "*Telegram, News, Evening Sun*—all about the battle of Plevna!"

Upon this Sammy, the second of the duet, screams: "Extree extra! Osmond Pasha a-butcherin' the Russen wounded! Schoboleft a-fightin' of 'im too the death! Massacree of the Bosphorous!"

The din they make is so unendurable that Mrs. Mawley, placing her plump hands to her ears, cries out: "Good Heavens, stop that noise!"

But the Reverend Mr. Mawley replies soothingly, "No, my darling boys, I want you to dress in the uniform of this institution and answer certain questions some gentlemen will put to you in the course of an hour or so."

"Any money in the job?" remarks Jakie with the air of a man of business.

"Yes, fifty cents a piece."

"Then we can do Wood's Museum to-night, Sammy, and I'll go you a pint of peanuts between acts," says the young financier generously.

"It's a go," assents Sammy.

"Then come, my dears, and get your uniform on," says Mrs. Mawley placidly.

But while this has been going on the boys have been using their eyes; the unnatural gloom of the place, the pallor of the drawn faces about Mawley's inhospitable board has impressed itself upon the denizens of an outer and a happier world. A horrible thrill of suspicion flies through their precocious minds. They gaze at the unhappy faces and gaunt forms of those who wear the uniform of Mawley.

"Say," remarks the elder, "This ain't no dodge to make paupers out of us? If so we mizzle," and the two boys get together in pugilistic attitude to prevent any force being used to detain them.

"Only for half an hour," utters Mawley soothingly.

"Square?" says Sammy, suspiciously.

"Of course, my dears; you are speaking to a minister," remarks Mrs. Mawley.

Whereupon Jakle assents: "That's perpendicular! But we want it in advance—two half dollars!"

And Mr. Mawley after searching in his pocket for the coins, produces them and pays him.

During this, Sammy, who is a very round faced plump vender of news, has drawn near blue-eyed Sallie, who has reached out her little hand and cautiously pinched his arm. "What's the matter, shrimp?" says the urchin with a guffaw.

"Why—why you're *fat*!"

"Well, what of that, sissy?" queries the news boy.

"Why, I never, never saw a *fat* boy before," says the little girl, her eyes growing big with astonishment. For she had been brought up in the institution and fatness in men as exemplified by Mr. Mawley seems natural to her, but that children should be well fed and plump, out of the very course of nature itself.

"Cracky!" cries Jakie, laughingly.

And Sammy, pointing down to her, guffaws: "Never saw a fat boy before. Here's five cents for you, sis," giving her a nickel, at which the little girl utters a cry of delight, for it is the first coin she has ever had in her little life, either to play with or to spend.

But this scene has grown embarrassing both to Mrs. Mawley and her husband, though the latter has attempted to regard it as a joke and has guffawed louder even than the newsboys.

"Come down stairs and earn your coins now you have got them," remarks his spouse; and the two products of liberty go down with stamping feet and merry yells of laughter, leaving the children of philanthropic Mawley looking after them, astounded that there is such happiness within the world.

CHAPTER IV.

"I SOLD THE BIBLE!"

"WHAT fine, fat lads to show to the Committee," murmurs the reverend gentleman rubbing one hand over the other in unctuous bliss. "And now to business!" this last more sternly. "But first come here, Sallie, my child," beckoning the little one to him, who approaches reluctantly. "Come here!" with a stamp of his foot, as the child shudderingly goes to him. Then his voice becomes unctuous and soft again. "That boy gave you a coin. Give it to me. Remember, money buys candy and candy produces biliousness, which is bad for little girls. *Give it here!*" And taking the little fist that clenches closely the first coin of Sallie's life, Mr. Mawley despoils the child of her first present, and she goes sobbingly back to her seat, while the philanthropist's voice, growing very stern, commands: "Now to discipline! Look me in the eye!" and his gaze seems to fascinate them all. "Who gave Mathilde their provisions? Who gave——?"

To this some of the children falteringly gasp: "It was French Eva and Mollie and Sallie."

"That's a lie! I didn't give her *my* provisions, I gave her *Annie's* provisions," mutters Miss Bowery doggedly.

"Deceit and prevarication! Do you ever expect to go to heaven?"

"On this grub," answers the product of the streets, savagely, "I'll go to heaven in about a week!"

Whereupon something unpleasant would have happened to her, for Mawley has muttered, "Insolence!" and has reached out his chastising hand, did not at this

moment his spouse reappear again saying excitedly: "Jonas, a letter from the Committee!"

Opening it, the Shepherd's face grows radiant. "From our dear philanthropic Committee. They are all too busy, they write me, to inspect the institution," he murmurs; then raising his voice remarks: "Listen, you ingrates, to what the Committee thinks of your kind benefactor," and reads:

"We know that the children are in the hands of a man who has devoted his life to philanthropy, and of course are aware that everything is being done for the welfare of the children in The Shepherd's Fold."

"Remember that," he adds, "when you feel inclined to rebel against kindness and parental discipline; when your gluttonous stomachs cry out for more food that would be bad for you!"

Then he says uxoriously to his wife: "My pet, have you let the newsboys go?"

"Yes."

"Did you get the fifty cents apiece back from them?"

"They refused to give it up."

"The godless robbers!" mutters the saintly man, and his voice becomes harsher as he adds: "Patience, bring me the Bible. I will read a chapter from it and say the evening prayers, then the children shall go to bed—it is better for them to retire by daylight, candles are dear."

But Mrs. Mawley turning to get the Bible of the institution gives an astonished little squeak: "Jonas, it isn't here."

"What is not here?"

"The Bible isn't here."

"Impossible! It must be here—or did you take it to the Committee Room that the gentlemen might notice it prominently?"

"No."

"Run down stairs and see."

A moment later Mrs. Mawley bounces into the room and ejaculates: "The Bible of the Fold isn't below!"

"Good gracious! we use it enough. It must be somewhere," cries the Shepherd.

But though both he and his wife search through the bare school-room and barer dining-room the Bible can't be found, and Mawley looks about for some one upon whom to ope the vials of his wrath.

He finds one ready to his hand. Annie has just come in breathless from her errand.

"I've—I've brought a doctor," she stammers. Then she would apparently add to her story, "He—he was——"

"Stop that noise!" cries Mawley sternly, and beckoning Annie to him says savagely, "What have you done with the Bible?"

"The—the Bible!" stutters the girl. "What Bible?"

"The Bible of the institution. Don't prevaricate. Answer me! It was left in your charge as well as everything else in this room. What have you done with it?"

"I—I don't know," falters the unfortunate one, apprehension in her eyes, for Mr. Mawley's appearance is appalling.

"Don't know? Then I will *teach* you to know. If you don't find that Bible by eight o'clock to-night, come to me in my library."

At this dire injunction Annie falls on her knees screaming wildly for mercy, for Mr. Mawley's library is also his torture chamber, in which he visits the delinquencies of childhood upon their trembling frames with cruel stripes.

But here a gasp of astonishment comes from the surrounding and affrighted inmates of his home. Eve-

lyn Ellison's voice is heard calmly saying: "If you whip Annie you will do wrong. It will be impossible for her to find it. It is not her fault it is not here. I—I SOLD IT!" And despite herself a tremor of dread is in the young girl's voice.

"Sold *what?*"

"Sold the Bible for fifteen cents to keep my little sister *alive!*" answers the girl confronting Mawley, indignation overcoming fear.

"*Sold the Bible!*" Here the Reverend Jonas's face assumes an expression of horror of such tremendous intensity that Bowery Mollie, who has not been long enough in the establishment to have forgotten how, shrieks with laughter, though the scene is a horrible one, for the great, big, oily, powerful man has reached out his hand and taken the thin yet graceful figure of the girl by her two shoulders and is gazing at her as the snake does at his prey.

"SOLD THE BIBLE!" he repeats, as if he could not understand such awful depravity. "Sold it for PROVISIONS." Then his eyes seek the floor near the little Mathilde, and he mutters: "Yes, the crumbs are those of *pie* and *CAKE*. We never have pie and cake here. By the Lord, I believe you—you thief—you ingrate—you have sold the word of God for a mess of pottage." Each adjuration being emphasized by a shake that makes his victim's teeth rattle like castanets.

But the brave eyes of the girl look into his, and she answers passionately, but without a whimper, though his strong fingers are bruising her delicate arms:

"Yes! I would sell my soul to keep my little sister from the starvation of your home!"

"By heaven, you look it!" mutters Mawley. "You have more devil than angel in you, my lady, with all your airs and graces," and despite himself he

can't help noting the promise of good and evil in the girl—that she will be a Cornelia or a Cleopatra—one or the other. “You know the punishment for stealing in my institution,” he goes on, a kind of savage Puritanism in his voice, “Stripes for the thief!”

At this the girl suddenly blushes, then grows deathly pale and trembles, though her great eyes never leave his face.

But Mrs. Mawley hurriedly says “Not here! Not now! The doctor is below with the sick child.”

“You are right, Patience, my angel!” assents Mr. Mawley. “I'll take this culprit to my library, and after I have finished with the rest here, I will thrash the evil out of her!”

Then with strong hand he drags the girl—though she says no word, nor makes resistance—to his library, that is upon the same floor of the house, and locks her in—not taking the trouble to note that a hay wagon is approaching along the unpaved street upon which the windows of this room open.

Returning from this to his affrighted flock, the administrator of public justice gets a shock.

Annie continues her story that Mawley had interrupted by his threats, and horrifies the Shepherd. She says: “I have brought a doctor, but not the one you sent for; he was out!”

“Then whom did you bring?”

“I don't know, sir; he was with his father at the door; I heard his father calling him a doctor, and I begged him to come in.”

Whereupon Mawley, in a gasp of horror, ejaculates: “Did I not tell you I would have no strange doctor?”

And the girl murmurs: “Oh, sir, the child was so sick I could not bear to wait.” Then she adds simply: “He is a good doctor. He knows what's the matter with the child.”

"The devil," gasps the saintly Mawley, turning pale.

"And he says she is to have chicken broth and wine."

"Chicken broth and WINE! Perhaps he'll expect me to buy it. I can sell my property to buy it, as that wretched girl did, to give cake and pie to her glutton sister."

And he picks up Mattie and shakes her, and raises his hand, as the little child puts up her innocent face to him and cries: "You bad man; what have you done with my sister!" then screams as he smacks her, "*Sœur chérie à moi—à moi!*"

At her cry a handsome young man of alert step springs in the door, seizes Mawley's upraised hand, twists him round and throws him to one side, muttering, "Brute!"

"Who are you, coming between a child and her legal guardian," snarls the Shepherd.

"I am the doctor called in to attend the sick child below. Permit me to present my card," and he does so, and looking at it, Mawley stammers, "James Bertram Guernsey, M.D."

"I came here with my father, Overhand Guernsey, to see two children he left in your charge nearly four years ago. At the gate I was asked by this girl to look at a sick child below. I entered this room to give you my report. This poor little girl's cries for mercy caught my ear. My profession is to mitigate suffering in the world. Could I listen to the cry of a fatherless child and not answer it?" Then he calls out sternly, "*Father!*"

At his word Overhand Guernsey comes in, and Mawley gazes at him astounded and dismayed.

"Where are the two children of Arthur Ellison?" he asks hurriedly, almost frightenedly, for the appearance of the place has given many a pang to ~~this~~ man who,

with the fear of prison taken from him, has discovered he has a conscience, and it is smiting him.

"One's sobbin' on the floor, and the other's locked up in the library waitin' to be licked," screams Bowery Mollie.

"Which way?" cries Guernsey and his son together.

"Third door on the right," yells the product from the slums, excitedly dancing a jig of delight about Mawley, who has sunk in dismay upon a chair as his two visitors have run along the passage.

A minute after they return, the elder bearing in his hand a scrap of paper. "Your victim has fled from you," he says, holding it before the Shepherd's eyes, who reads:

"I dare not stay, for if you struck me, I should kill you. I had ground a pair of scissors for you, *lâche* and *assassin* that you are. Beware how you treat Mathilde, for some day I shall return for her.

"That is her handwriting?" questions the elder Guernsey, gazing at the unformed, childish characters.

"Yes," mutters Mawley excitedly. "She can't be far off!"

"My sister has runned away," falters Mathilde. Then she sobs with the unconscious pathos of childhood: "I shall never see my Evie again!" and screams: "*Viens sœur chérie!* Come back to *Mignonnette!* come back!"

Listening to her, Guernsey's conscience cries out within him, "My crime!"

"You cruel ruffian! the child below is suffering not from fever but from starvation," remarks the young doctor, sternly confronting Mawley. "Heaven has not punished you, but I will see that the law does!"

"Bully for you!"

"Bully for 'ou!"

The first comes from Bowery Mollie, who is clap-

ping her hands like wild. The second is an echo from the tot Sallie, who has placed admiring blue eyes upon the dashing young doctor.

But his father interposes nervously: "First let us find the sister." Then, for his conscience is smiting him very hard now, he takes into his arms the daughter of his betrayed friend and mutters: "You shall be happy again, little one I will take you where you shall suffer no more."

"Where's that?" prattles the child in a tired, dreamy way.

"HOME!" answers the man in a husky voice, moving with his burden towards the door, the children of the Fold gazing at him open-eyed, astonished and silent.

"Home!—like papa's home—where people say kind words to you and you ain't *never* hungry?" asks the child with unbelieving voice and astonished eyes.

"Yes," murmurs Guernsey. Then he prays: "May her dead father forgive me now!" and lifting the little face to his kisses it and his tears fall upon it.

Then of a sudden little Sallie cries, clapping her little hands: "Oh, he *tissed* her!" And as the handsome young doctor, dressed in fine raiment, turns to follow his father, this toddler who has never known father nor mother, nor love, nor even Christian kindness, springs after this man who has shown to her for the first time in her short life, humanity; seizes his coat tails and tugging at them with baby hands puts up a pathetic face and cries: "Say, Mister! won't 'ou tiss me?"

"Kiss you, little waif? Why?" asks the doctor in kindly surprise.

"Because," says the little one simply, "I'VE NEVER—NEVER BEEN TISSED—IN MY WHOLE LIFE!"

"My God!" mutters the young man, and takes her to his heart with streaming eyes.

* * * * *

Coming out from Mawley's Fold bearing one sister in his arms, Guernsey and his son seek for the other. But night is coming on, already it is dark, and even the suburb of a great city has too many people upon its streets to make one poor girl, more or less, of notice or distinction.

The son would advertise and call the police to aid in the search, but his father dissuades him from this, for Guernsey is a man upon whose conscience self-interest is a most potent narcotic. He fears to make the affair public, or to prosecute Mawley, dreading anything that may throw light upon his treatment of the two little girls confided to his care by the hand of their dead father who had trusted him.

Consequently, though Doctor Jim makes diligent inquiries on his own account, two days afterward they return to Guernsey's great western cattle ranch, bearing with them one little child, Mathilde.

The shadows of a great city have fallen upon the other, the older one.

BOOK II.

CATCHING A SENATOR.

CHAPTER V.

"I WILL BE HIS CLEOPATRA!"

"Bijou, I must have a senator!"

"What the devil do you want with a senator?" growls a masculine voice.

"*Mon cher*, I want him, to *sell* him," laughs the lady.

"What the deuce is one of those Albany fellows worth to anybody but himself?"

"*Mon petit*, I don't speak of a State senator, I aspire to a United States senator. This newspaper says that many of them sell themselves for a great deal of money to trusts and corporations. Now I want a senator to sell him for my own benefit, not his. *Comprenez?*" And Eva Montessor taps the forehead of the curly-headed, mustachioed young giant, whom she has addressed as "Bijou" and "*Mon petit*"; then adds: "Put that in thy little brain, canst thou?"

"By the living Jingo, if you cut up any monkey-shines with him I'll go on a rampage that will astonish you," remarks the husband to the wife.

"Astonish me, my dear? That is impossible. Anyway," adds the lady with a sigh, "it is better than Bohemian starvation. Why don't you go on a rampage to earn—*money?*"

"Have I not slaved like a Trojan?" replies the gentleman addressed. "Didn't I play light comedy

in Varick's Company and *walk* home? Haven't I painted pictures until the paint man won't trust me for more artist's materials? What do you want me to do—*work*?"

This last word is uttered in an injured voice as if the cruelty implied by the idea is too terrible to contemplate.

"Bah, Bijou! all I ask of you is to be silent and to do as you are told."

"What's that?"

"Be a good little boy and not cut up rough while wifey directs the family ship. Then it can eat bonbons and do nothing for the rest of its life. It can even make love to all the latest imported *coro*, and I shall say nothing," remarks the lady gazing upon the chalky face of the young man that grows florid with blushes at this insinuation. "It's anxious to run away now, I see," she continues with a laugh. "Who is it? Miss Betty Tollemache, of the Artist's Girl Company or Mademoiselle Carrolia Guissipé of the Metropolitan First Line of Coryphées. You see I'm not jealous my dear; in fact I don't think enough of you to be jealous. You want to go your way; do it if you like. I will follow mine. I have greater ambitions. Besides ours was an emotional, touch and go, Bohemian marriage, anyway!" and she pats his big blonde cheeks and laughs at him.

The gentleman does not answer this directly; he merely mutters longingly, "By jove, I wish I had a cigar."

"Agree to my proposition and Claudie shall have one," jeers the lady.

"By George, that means that you have money, Evie!" cries the man brightening up.

"Yes, I always have *a little*. If I didn't the dinner hour would be the bad one for both you and me," remarks his spouse philosophically.

"Then hand it over," replies the gentleman, his manner becoming brisk and eager.

"I will—enough for one cigar. I didn't stipulate for a box," and the girl, for though she is old enough to be a matron, Evelyn Montessor still bears vivacious and perennial youth on her fair face, holds a dainty hand over the giant, and drops a quarter of a dollar into his outstretched palm.

"Is that *all*!"

"*Mon Dieu!* Do you want cigars that cost *more* than twenty-five cents, my sybarite, who cannot smoke a pipe, and who disdains cigarettes?" ejaculates the lady as she stands over him in dainty pose, for Claude Auchester Montessor is a great big lazy fellow, and is reclining at full length in a hammock this sultry April day.

"By Jove, I wish I could paint you as you look now; that would make my fortune," he says languidly, his eyes for a moment lighting up with admiration.

"Thank you, Bijou, but I have no wish to be caricatured by your brush," she replies. "You had that opportunity when in honeymoon lunacy I *thought* you could paint. But now——"

"Now," growls Claude, savagely, "you sit for Amadie, the Italian."

"Yes," answers the lady, "I have posed for him. You needn't get angry, Claude. You have seen the picture. Only head, shoulders and arms in the discreet décolleté of the ladies you admire in the boxes of the Metropolitan Opera House. And it has been the luckiest thing I ever did. For Amadie is a genius, an industrious genius, who decorates walls and ceilings all the day for his bread and butter, and paints like lightning all the night for fame and fortune. And what has been the result? He offered to exhibit my portrait at one of their fashionable women shows,

where they give tea for charity and collect much money for the poor, and it was rejected because I had not Colonial ancestry. But strung up on the walls in Twenty-third street, that didn't prevent its being the rage, did it? And now I have, as the result, admirers by the score."

"Yes, four newspaper men, fourteen actors, and one capitalist," answers the other, with surly emphasis upon the last of his catalogue.

"There, you've hit it at last, my stupid one," says the lady, laughingly. "*One* capitalist—that is the important item in your schedule—Mr. Steinbergh, of the Gelatine Trust."

"Aha! it is he who has put into your head the idea of selling a senator! Are you going to vend him to Steinbergh?"

"Hush, my dear; Mr. Steinbergh has never mentioned the thing to me. It's the newspapers—they have suggested the idea; the gossiping newspapers and poverty that quickens the wits."

"Poverty, bah!" answers her companion. "If I could paint you as you look now I could sell the picture for more money——"

"Than you will ever make by your brush, my lazy Claude," laughs the lady.

And she is right; for few more beautiful pictures have come to the eye of man upon this earth than Evelyn Montessor; as she stands in the sunshine that beams through the open window upon her, making every hair upon her charming head a thread of gold, lighting up her sapphire eyes, and tinging in loving lights and shadows the airy graces of her form as she stands there in exquisite pose, looking like a daughter of Spring. Her face has that vivacious nobility that gives lightness and dainty sauciness to features that without it would be, perchance, too coldly classical,

though her eyes emit flashes that show there is a great and resolute spirit, perchance sometimes a misguided one, behind their rainbow loveliness. Her mouth would be perhaps too firm for a woman, did not the tender softness of the lips indicate a subdued and restrained passion that at times may make her heart rule her head—in some grand affair, some great sacrifice—when she will give her all, and give it *nobly*!

“Byskittles!” says the man looking at her, “you’re as lovely as the angels of Paradise!” Then he adds eagerly, “But I think I will go for my cigar.”

With this the gentleman springs from his hammock, and putting on a light hat, bangs the door after him in his rapid exit in search of the longed-for weed.

“Beautiful as the angels of Paradise!” sneers the lady, looking after him. “Yes, Claude, that’s a souvenir of our honeymoon frenzy. Now, I am not so attractive as Betsy Tollemache of the Artist’s Girl Company, and scarcely compare in your emotions with Carrolia Guissipé of the Metropolitan Coryphees.” Then she adds bitterly, “My Claude, you have had your hour. We drifted together, why should we not drift apart. This summer is the last of you for me, you miserable, lazy, worthless, do everything, do nothing drone!”

And the lady clenches her hands and looks about the apartment, which is Bohemian from the parrot that has been gazing admiringly upon her and now shrieks: “Go home! Go home! the wine’s all gone!” to the easel with one of Claude’s half finished daubs upon it, and the cushioned hammock, made for lazy lounging. The articles of furniture are inexpensive, most of them, but some of them very dainty; and one or two quite costly and bearing the inscription, “To Mademoiselle Chica.” A piano, a guitar, a banjo, attest the musical quality in the Bohemian pair.

Some late novels, most of them in French; a pair of

gigantic men's slippers in opposite corners of the room, an empty beer bottle on a side table, and three or four pictures, one of which is apparently painted by a genius and signed "Amadie," as well as a photograph of the lady herself, her exquisitely proportioned form displayed by an inspired Parisian evening gown, and underneath the brief statement, "Chica," give variety to the *mise-en-scène*.

These, with a set of boxing gloves, a pair of foils, one of them broken; a picture of the gentleman of the late conversation, arrayed in hose and doublet and with a long rapier, inscribed, "Mr. Montessor, in his great character of the Silent Cavalier," a part in which Claude had made his only hit, chiefly because the exigencies of the rôle compelled him to keep his mouth very firmly closed during the whole performance—all go to give a peculiar bric-a-brac appearance to the room.

"It's an old curiosity shop," laughs the young lady, glancing around the room. Then she mutters: "I wonder if they will bring money enough for my plan!" showing that she has thoughts of turning the household *lares et penates* into gold for some scheme that is in her vivacious brain.

A moment after she suddenly claps her hands and laughs: "I'll do it—I'll sell him *high*!" next mutters, "But how to get him and who to get? These senators are mostly wary old birds. Steinbergh tells me that the Senate is the difficult place for the Gelatine bill."

Here she suddenly starts and cries: "Come in! I know it's you by your knock."

"You know it's who?" says the gentleman, entering.

"You, of course—Von Spitzer!"

"That is a safe guess, after you see my face," Von Spitzer laughs. Then he goes on, casting a glance at the spring toilet of the lady, which is soft white muslin, with three patches of color—blue at neck, waist

and slippered feet: "Tell you what, Evie, you're the smartest little chick within eight or ten blocks of Washington Square."

For the apartment occupied by Evelyn and Claude is in that peculiar neighborhood which is filled with a mixture of everything in a social way and in an *unsocial* way. The homes of the great families of New York that cannot give up their charming old spacious residences about the north side of the square are in juxtaposition with the cheap boarding houses of everyday indigent existence and mixed up with apartment houses, some of which are of such elegance that they claim millionaires for their occupants, while others are of such invitingly low rentals that they are inhabited by empty-pocketed Bohemians.

For Bohemia is always empty-pocketed. If it has money it spends it as soon as possible; if it has no money it doesn't care much as long as it has a *good* time which generally ends in a *bad* time; for there are more broken hearts *per capita* than in any other spot on God's footstool, in that ephemeral land yclept Bohemia, and lauded by poets and authors as a place of wondrous gaiety, lightheartedness, comradeship, bonhomie and all the nobility of manhood and womanhood. But its generosity consists usually in borrowing from a friend, its comradeship is mostly backbiting, hatred and envy of success in others, its nobility consists in deifying every irresponsible, rash, and seductive animalism. It revels in the lusts of the flesh and the excitements of the sensations. Its glory is of tinsel, its gaiety is the saddest upon earth.

It was in this realm of unhealthy emotions that Evelyn Montessor had blossomed from girlhood into womanhood. It was from this she proposed to escape, not that its unreality troubled her sweet soul greatly;

familiarity had made it seem *au naturel*. It was its indigence—its lack of capital that displeased her most. The shock of seeing Claude boisterous and roisterous was as naught to the shock of wondering how she would get a good dinner to satisfy her healthy appetite, or a new and *chic* costume to grace her delightful figure. She now proposes by a bold stroke to settle these questions for life and in the right way.

Her mind being full of this idea this bright May day, she answers Von Spitzer quite carelessly: "So glad I please you. What a pity I didn't please you on canvas in poor Amadie's picture. I believe you devoted half a column in the morning *Pursuivant* to giving my portrait *fits*! Don't you know that was a personal attack upon *me*? For Florio has made that canvas speak. It is my living, breathing image!" And her eyes gleam on him like a pair of blue diamonds.

"Consequently you're now giving me *FITS*!" answers the gentleman addressed, who is Franz Heinrich Von Spitzer, art critic of the morning paper the lady has mentioned, who, being a foreigner, hates everything in the way of American art—in fact, hates everything American save the American dollar, which he affects to despise also—but does not.

"I would like to give you *fits*, but it isn't possible," laughs the lady, sneeringly. "You are already *rabid* on the subject of American art. Still I suppose I should forgive you because you gave the picture half a column of venomous platitudes. That shows that you fear—that you *know* it is *good*! But little Amadie Florio—beware of him, the long Italian knife and vendetta *à la* Corsica. However, if you particularly wish to attack American art, here is just the thing for you. Pitch into my husband's picture," and she points with vivacious white hand to Claude's latest daub on the easel. "You can do that with a good deal of truth."

"Why, I—I rather like it," says the gentleman, looking at it. "It's of the Impressionist School—a sunset, I imagine."

"*Ciel!* You have diagnosed it perfectly. It is Claude's attempt at an ocean storm, but, fortunately, it's upside down. We'll label it 'Sunset,' and sell it as such."

"To—to whom?" stammers the art critic, stifling a laugh; "to Steinbergh?"

"Yes, to Steinbergh," giggles Evie. "He said he wanted something lurid to light up the Dutch masters he has bought at your recommendation." Then she adds, blushing slightly: "Why did you say, sell it to Steinbergh?"

"Because," answers Von Spitzer, "to be frank, I believe you sell most of your husband's pictures to Steinbergh. He has a collection of them locked up in a closet. He treasures them as undeveloped photographic negatives that the light would destroy."

"Has Claude sold them?" asks the lady, feigning astonishment, the blush growing a little deeper upon her fair cheeks; for Von Spitzer is smiting her hard. It is she who has sold Claude's pictures to Steinbergh. At this moment Mr. Montessor is enjoying a twenty-five cent cigar, purchased by the money of his brush, in the presence of Miss Betty Tollemache, and would be fearfully disgusted if he knew that this quarter is all he will get of a hundred dollar bill received for a picture painted by his laborious brush that but yesterday had passed into the beneficent financier's art collection. Then she adds, attempting a laugh: "Ah, you're a wonderful man, you critic! You know so much."

"Yes, and shall soon know more. I'm not only the art *feuilletonist*, but I am going to be the musical critic on our evening edition. You sing in concerts again next winter?"

"Yes, but not in New York," answers Evelyn. "Sharpen your pen for me if I ever come to the Metropolitan Opera House or Carnegie Music Hall."

"I believe I can get you an engagement to sing in one or two concerts up there this coming season," returns Mr. Von Spitzer, suggestively. "What do you think about it?"

"I will tell you when the winter arrives. Perhaps I may have a cold about that time. Great artistes often do."

"That means you won't sing."

"It means that I am uncertain."

"You have other views?"

"Perhaps."

"You think of going to Europe to cultivate your voice with the money obtained from your husband's artistic brush?" This is said in a tone of shy yet significant sarcasm.

"I only think of having a pleasant summer and keeping cool," laughs Evie, fanning herself in a dainty Spanish fashion. Then she breaks out petulantly: "What did you come here for, anyway? You know I don't receive until three o'clock. Gaze at the apartment! Breaking in upon me before I have made the toilet of the afternoon."

"Oh, you always look good enough for anything. Whoever saw Mrs. Montessor but at her very best?" answers the gentleman. "However, I came to ask you if you wouldn't join a party at Koster & Bial's this evening? I've had a box tendered me by the management since I've become a musical critic, and have invited Mr. Steinbergh and Flora Atherton, and shall be pleased if you and Claude will join us."

"Ah! Miss Atherton's engagement is over?"

"Oh, yes; her company closed the other day."

Mr. Von Spitzer has mentioned the name of a young

actress who has just been attracting New York opera glasses to her vivacious comedy and pretty self at a metropolitan theatre.

"Does a dinner go with it?" queries the lady eagerly.

"Brava! I like the way you ask things, straightforward and frank; no beating about the bush in la belle Chica!"

"Oh, drop my *nom de concert*, please; Chica is unknown in New York. I've never made a sensation in the metropolis. Chica is for the West, where they imagine I am a prima donna, and in New England, where they believe I am a graduate of the Boston Conservatory. But did you say dinner?"

"No, I didn't say dinner, but Steinbergh says dinner, and it's a good deal better than if I said dinner, because he'll give you a much better one," laughs the young man. "Besides, if you'll go, I'll retract in to-morrow's paper all I said about Amadie's daub in to-day's."

"If you don't I'll never speak to you again," laughs the lady, "for between you and me I'm interested in that picture as a speculation. Amadie and I divide if it's sold, and when a person attacks my *porte-monnaie* without sufficient cause, I hate him."

"Very well, you'll come?" says the young man.

"With pleasure, if I can get hold of Claude, and if not—well, I'll come anyway. I presume you want a chaperone for Miss Atherton. They are so necessary in Bohemia, especially at Koster & Bial's!"

"Enough said!" answers Von Spitzer. "Amadie's picture to-morrow shall be an inspiration. No one is fit to be a critic who cannot write with sufficient tact to retract his words if the thing makes a success with the public, and between ourselves I think Amadie's picture is making a hit. At all events it is now marked "SOLD" at the Academy."

"Sold!" cries the lady; then adds contemplatively: "I wonder how much he got for it?" as though it makes a great deal of difference with her future; for the problem that has been running through her beautiful head all this morning has been a financial one. It is this: Can she get together enough of filthy lucre to make a show in Washington for the allurements, enslavement, and capture of her senator? She does not know which one will be her senator—that she must decide later.

Yet, notwithstanding her mental preoccupation, she smiles very pleasantly at the young man as he takes his leave, saying merrily: "I would say, 'God go with you,' but He never will! So good bye, and love to Flossie!"

Her laughter dies away as Von Spitzer's footsteps grow faint. Her white forehead wrinkles, her blue eyes contract as if she is thinking. She pulls out a little set of ivory tablets and goes to figuring upon them; then suddenly cries: "I can do it, if Amadie hasn't been a business fool and sold my portrait for a song!"

Into this meditation breaks a wild-eyed little Italian, with nervous rap and excitable entry. He whispers to her eagerly: "I have sold it! *Dio Mio!* May God forgive me, I have sold it!"

"I would never have forgiven you if you hadn't sold it," remarks the lady; then says as nervously as the little Italian himself: "Amadie, for how much did you sell it? I hope you valued me highly."

"For this—this piece of paper, half of which is yours," and the Italian tosses a check into her lap, then goes on excitedly: "I would never have parted with your portrait; your sweet canvas eyes should have beamed on me forever, to light me to new triumphs of the brush. For, *entre nous*, I now have

orders. Mrs. Wheatstuff, of Chicago, wishes her portrait painted by me. Miss Carrie Patriarch, of Fifth avenue, would like her patrician features depicted by me. I now stroke my mustache and look at the critics with scorn, especially that Von Spitzer, the German sausage beast. Did you read his article?" hisses the little fellow, rolling his dark Italian eyes in a kind of horror. "*Corpo di Baccho!* Did you see what the *barbaro* said of you?"

"Yes," murmurs the lady, who is examining the piece of paper he has given her quite eagerly. "I noted that Von Spitzer hinted if you had done justice to *me* your picture would have been a triumph." Then she suddenly cries: "It is for a thousand dollars—oh, Florio, a thousand dollars, you dear little genius!" next mutters, commercial instinct dominating her: "I wonder if the check is good. I don't know the name."

"Not know the name?" cries Amadie Florio. "Can't you read it? It is *il Signor* James B. Guernsey, the United States Senator just elected from Populoso, the new State."

"Populoso!" laughs the lady. "Yes, I've heard it is a melange of a cattle ranch and mining camp." Then she suddenly adds: "The name does seem familiar to me. Where have I heard it? Guernsey——"

Suddenly over her mobile features comes a flash that lights up her blue eyes with a ray that is brilliant but not benign. "Guernsey!" she murmurs. "Get the check cashed, Amadie, bring me the money—Guernsey!" Her face grows pale and drawn as she suggests: "Could you find out more about him? I would like to know the history of this man Guernsey. Couldn't you borrow at the bookstore around the corner the *Lives of Self-Made Americans*? Perchance I may learn of him there."

"What difference does it make to you?" remarks Amadie. "He is a United States Senator; of course his check is good. Besides, I have heard people say he is worth a million. That Populoso may not be much of a State, but he owns the most of it."

"Nevertheless, Amadie, do my errand for me. Bring me the book; you always do what I ask you."

"*Sapristi!* I will now, only promise me to sit for another portrait. This time an ideal one."

"Oh, yes; anything you like. Get me the book," answers the lady, as if anxious to be alone.

And the little Italian runs away upon his errand.

"Do I know this Guernsey?" she mutters to herself. "Is he—no, that is impossible. The name of the man was Overhand Guernsey—the man who robbed me of papa's last letter which said we were rich—who gave my poor little sister and me for our heritage, hunger and stripes—who placed me at the mercy of that cruel ruffian!—Yes, I remember Guernsey! By the memory of my sister I have not forgotten him," she goes on muttering hoarsely. "The sister I shall never see again, who has gone Heaven knows where—dead—lost; for when I returned to that place Mawley had met his deserts and was in prison and there was no more Shepherd's Fold. There was nothing left of it only the broken hearts it had made." Then she jeers herself: "What nonsense! for me to think the man who purchased my picture is any relative to the Wall Street broker. He is probably some great, good-natured western giant with a heart big enough for the whole world and—one woman? Perhaps he is *my* senator!" and ends the whole thing with a prolonged and melodious whistle.

This rhapsody is broken in upon by the return of Amadie bearing a large volume inscribed upon the back: "America's Intellectual Giants. G—J."

Into this book, at the letter "G," she dives with vivacious eagerness, finding the names of self-made soap men, ambitious leather dealers, and millionaire stove polish manufacturers, mixed up with a few of the really representative men of the country. For it is a book that has been published by subscription, and any intellectual giant who will subscribe fifty dollars is noticed in it, and if he pays one hundred dollars more the portrait of his intellectual face adorns the page as well. In this book she finds the name of Guernsey, Overhand; beside it is a face that makes her start and gasp: "The face of the past!"

She hurriedly reads the notice.

"Once a financial magnate of Wall Street, now removed to and living in Silveropolis, the capital of Populoso, soon to be admitted to the Union. This coming State owes a great deal to the extraordinary financial and executive ability of the gentleman whose portrait we print."

She runs over his life, and it mentions that one son is born to him and survives him—James Bertram—now one of the leading men of Populoso, a candidate for the United States Senate from that territory as soon as it shall become a State.

"Survives him! How I have *hoped* he lived," she mutters. "The dead are safe from the living."

Then she questions the little Italian eagerly: "This gentleman, this United States Senator, how did he chance to purchase your picture?"

"Ah, that was very curious," answers Amadie. "He seemed impressed by the beauty of the painting, still I think he would not have bought it, but for the young lady who was with him."

"His wife?"

"I think not; I imagine she is his sister from their conversation. But it was at her request that he

bought the portrait. She talked with the Doctor—I believe he is a medical man professionally—eagerly for some time. I don't know what their conversation was, I only caught these words: 'Buy, it to please me!'"

"Ah, then he did not care for it."

"On the contrary he had admired it greatly. He said the woman who had sat for it must be striking as the Goddess of Liberty on a new silver dollar."

"And so I presume my features will grace his palatial log cabin in the West," sneers Evie, forcing herself to merriment, but all this time her brain is buzzing with a sudden, yet awful inspiration. "Leave the book, Amadie," she murmurs, "I'll see that it is returned. Go and get your money and my money."

"You will sit for me once more?" pleads the little Italian. "I wish to make an ideal picture this time."

"Of course! But as what will you paint me?" she queries impatiently, anxious to be alone.

"As the Goddess of Revenge!" answers the little Italian, who has been studying her fitful moods.

"The Goddess of Revenge! Do you think I could pose for that role?"

Here Amadie shocks her; he says impressively! "You could when you looked at the face in that book, *bella mia!* But I will arrange for the sittings, for time is precious to me now, more than ever." So he goes away, leaving her pondering upon his words.

"Did I look like that?" she thinks to herself; then ejaculates, "Yes, I *did!*" and looks it again. And reading over the book she mutters: "The son—the son of the father. Why not unto the third and fourth generation?" next mutters intensely: "As his father built up his fortune upon the ruin of me and mine, so will I build up my fortune on the ruin of him and his." And gazing at a mirror that reflects all her

seductive loveliness she murmurs: "I will be his Cleopatra!"

Two hours later Claude, striding in, finds his wife looking a picture of excited beauty. She is already dressed for the evening and cries: "Run along quick, you lazy fellow, and get on your dinner togs. Mr. Steinbergh has invited us."

"That means a champagne spread," returns her husband, eagerly. "But why are you so to the good this evening, Evie?"

"Congratulate me, dear boy," she answers effusively, with a slight, nervous laugh; then utters these curious words: "I HAVE FOUND MY SENATOR!"

To this her spouse returns snarlingly: "God help him!"

CHAPTER VI.

A NIGHT AT KOSTER & BIAL'S.

THIRTY minutes afterwards, Evelyn Montessor arrayed in as breezy and fetching a Parisian toilet as can be purchased on credit in New York, perfect as to boots and gloves, a dainty little Parisian bonnet perched upon her head, and bearing in her hand a white mass of fluffy lace she calls a parasol, steps down from her apartment and is landed into a carriage by Claude, who in evening dress looks very English and very "chappie," a prospect of a dinner always brightening his artistic nature.

"Tell the driver McGowan's Pass Tavern. We'll dine coolly amid green trees if we roast afterward at Koster & Bial's," remarks the lady to her husband.

So they drive out of the dust and heat of the city into the beautiful breathing spot for pent up New York yclept Central Park. Here they find green trees and a pleasant breeze awaiting them, and rolling up the East Drive mingle with the turnouts of those who have escaped from hot pavements to suggestions of the country, very well contented with themselves—at least Claude is—though the lady once or twice knits her pretty brows and pensively taps with parasol a dainty boot that peeps from under her white dress.

"What are you thinking of Evie?" he asks, noting her abstraction.

"*You!*" she answers, and the blue eyes look roguishly into his.

"And what about me?"

"*Après!*" And she falls into an uncontrollable fit of laughter which is so contagious that he joins in it,

though Claude's laugh would probably be on the other side of his mustache did he know the erratic and peculiar project that is in this lady's vivacious brain in regard to him. "Tell you all in a few days, dear boy," she says. "Meantime enjoy yourself. Did you have a naughty, pleasant visit to Betty Tollemache?"

Whereupon the gentleman growls: "Why do you always throw up that Tollemache to me?" Then he scowls and mutters: "Is it your excuse for Steinbergh?"

"Not at all; Mr. Steinbergh doesn't require any, unless a man needs it for having a good heart and being kind to us poor, struggling Bohemians. I only mentioned the lady to show that I know all about you, my Claude, and to prevent any of your usual virtuous outbursts when I tell you what I am going to do for you."

At this the lady goes to laughing again. This makes Claude look glum and solemn, for generally her amusement is at his expense.

"If you mean to throw my peccadillos at me, Madame, to operate as an excuse for any levity upon your part, you'll find you have a devilish hard customer to deal with," he says, attempting a ferocious dignity and pulling his mustache savagely.

"Do you know I like you in your heroics?" answers the lady, smiling at him. "When I was susceptible and foolish and first saw you, I thought that those great blue eyes of yours were so frank, and that lion-like expression, the one you've got upon your brow at present proved you to be the noblest of beasts—but now—you amuse me. That is all, my Claude; therefore, I smile at thy heroics and thy lion-like attitude and haughty mien, *mon petit*. But why should we quarrel when dinner is so near us? Look pleasant, cham-

pagne is not far off; that generally makes you good tempered when you don't get too much of it."

"Yes, Steinbergh always does the right thing in regard to dinners," answers the gentleman, "and then I know, Evie, your bark is much worse than your bite."

"Not when dinner is so near me," answers Evie, as they turn from the main drive and go up the little ascent that leads under the *porte cochère* of McGowan's Pass Tavern, a romantic-looking restaurant with a plebeian name, a spot of beauty, the only thing ugly about it being its cognomen.

"I wonder why they didn't give this pretty place a charming title like the Madrid in the Bois de Boulogne or *La Cascade*?" remarks Evie, as she gazes upon the McGowan sign.

"Aldermen!" answers her spouse sententiously as he assists her out.

In truth the place justifies her adjective! The broad veranda of the villa-like edifice is filled with women in the light beautiful costumes of spring which soften the masculine attire that is mingled with them. Beside it, along the main driveway of Central Park, roll equipages and turnouts innumerable. Everything from the four-in-hand of a member of the Coaching Club who is beginning to think of his summer eyrie at Newport, to the light trotting buggy of the sporty stockbroker, fly past, all handsomely horsed and gayly comparisoned. Upon the road is the rattle of wheels and patter of horses' hoofs. Upon the veranda the buzz of laughter and conversation from merry voices mingle with the popping of champagne corks, the click of glasses, and the clash of tuneful knife and fork, as agile waiters fly about.

Around this house filled with the hungry and thirsty, are green grass, beautiful flowers, and the exquisite foliage of endless trees and shrubs, made musical by

the songs of the birds, in their branches, inspired by the strains of a petit orchestra, on the portico, that is playing one of the brightest melodies of Strauss.

Contrasted with the heated city, the place is refreshing, inspiring, charming, and Evelyn, under its influence, is very bright and smiling as she steps forward to meet Mr. Steinbergh of the Gelatine Trust, who comes to greet her.

"I've had a table set apart for us," remarks the millionaire, who is a man of pleasant face, suave manner and figure that is approaching dangerously near to rotundity. In a few years Mr. Steinbergh will find himself obese; at present he is but a little over forty and still prides himself upon his form, which is well set off by clothes by one of the best tailors in New York, and linen as snowy as the tops of the Andes. He wears but little jewelry; a single ruby ring, whose perfect stone is tinted with the finest pigeon blood, being his only article of adornment, save a single pearl stud in his expansive shirt front. A pair of gold-rimmed eye-glasses give a rather searching expression to eyes that otherwise might be too soft. The gentleman has an expansive, even an intellectual, forehead and a mouth that, when it addresses a woman, is soft and winning, but when discussing discounts, interest and finance, is firmness itself. Altogether Mr. Steinbergh looks a Teuton and a banker.

"I have had seats placed for six," he murmurs as he leads Evie toward a table which has been beautified by a centerpiece of pretty flowers and three exquisite corsage bouquets.

"Six? There will be only five of us—Miss Ather-ton, Mr. Von Spitzer, you and I and Claude."

"I have brought another young lady here for Claude," whispers the financier.

"Who?"

"One that I imagine will please him," laughs Mr. Steinbergh; "Miss Atherton's understudy, Betty Tollemache."

"What!" gasps Evie, with such an expression on her face that her host says hurriedly:

"Why, you are astonished! Your husband suggested the lady himself. I—I supposed she was a friend of yours."

"So Claude knew of this dinner before this afternoon?"

"Yes; I asked him yesterday. He—he suggested Miss Tollemache. Didn't he tell you about it?"

Whereupon Evie gives the gentleman spoken of a look that might even cause him, hardened sinner as he is, trepidation did he but see it, and murmurs to herself: "This destroys my last pity for him."

"Ah, I believe the rest of the party are coming," remarks Mr. Steinbergh, and steps forward to greet them, giving her chance of speech with Claude, who looks surlily at her and mutters:

"I took you at your word. You said I could go my way. I'm doing it."

"Precisely. But still I think good taste would have suggested to you the fact that though the sight of this young lady may be very pleasant to you, it is not so agreeable to me. I admire the exquisite delicacy of your artistic soul, if you have any, dear boy. However, I shall now have an opportunity of judging whether your taste has improved since you first saw me."

Then she steps forward and greets Flora Atherton, who is a girl of lithe figure and expressive face, though there is a tinge of sadness upon it curious in the features of a comedienne. For her great potency upon the stage is that she says funny lines very sadly and plays *ingénues* in a shuddering, timid, trembling

style that sets an audience wild at her bashful *naïveté*.

"I am delighted to meet you, Mrs. Montessoro," says the actress. "I have felt as if I knew you ever since Von Spitzer an hour ago told me you had sent me your love."

"Yes, I had to give Von Spitzer something to carry away with him, and I had nothing else of value, so I let him carry my love to you with him."

"Von Spitzer," laughs Flora sadly, "told me you had given him your love to bring to me, but he had concluded to keep it for himself and present me with his own instead."

"Yes, Von Spitzer is always generous with love," remarks Steinbergh.

"I've got nothing else to be liberal with," mutters the critic. "If I had your pocketbook, my capitalist, I would probably receive more love and give away more money. But permit me, Mrs. Montessoro, to introduce to you Miss Betty Tollemache. I believe she knows everyone here but you."

"I've often heard my husband speak of you," remarks Evelyn, greeting the young lady, who is standing by Mr. Steinbergh's side.

"I can return the compliment, for I've often heard your husband speak of *you*," says Miss Betty with a little giggle and veiled glance towards Claude.

Then the party sit down, Steinbergh doing the honors with Evie at his right hand; and the dinner begins and goes along as most dinners do, that have been prepared by an excellent *chef*, and are served by expert waiters, enlivened by generous wine, made vivacious by wit, and charming by the presence of beautiful women. For Miss Tollemache is a very pretty girl, though of the laundried order, that at thirty will be *passé*, and at forty will look like the manicure's ghost. At present she has red cheeks,

bright eyes, white teeth, and incessant giggles. Everything she says commences with a titter and ends with an "he-he." The titters are louder and the "he-be's" more continuous as the champagne is passed the second time.

"What are you always he-heing for, Betty?" languidly questions Miss Atherton, who thinks she can be severe with her understudy. "Are you always thinking of men? And which 'he-he' are you thinking about at present?"

"Ha! ha! ha! you funny girl! You say such wicked, wicked things so sadly. I was thinking of *all* the gentlemen present—he!—he!—he!" punctuating each giggle with a stab of eyes and point of finger at each of the manly trio in succession.

"Never sacrifice grammar to a joke," says Von Spitzer, sternly. "You should have said, 'Him!—him!—him!'"

"Your etiquette, Mr. Precise, is worse than Miss Betty's syntax; criticising a lady's compliment!" interjects Steinbergh, gallantly.

"He! he! he!" giggles La Tollemache again.

"You don't respond, Montessor, to the lady whose every laugh is a flattery to our sex," murmurs the host, with suggestive glance.

"No, I'm not good at repartee," answers Claude. "At dinner I devote myself to *cutting* my meat. I shall never get another chance at this meal again, or this wine either," and he tosses off a bumper. "Wit comes with my coffee and cigars. At present I am as happy as an artist can be who hasn't sold a picture for a year."

At this, Von Spitzer looks wise, and Mr. Steinbergh has a conscious blush upon his face.

"Why, I don't see many of them around your rooms," remarks the art critic.

"Oh, they're stowed away," replies Claudine, nonchalantly, attacking a squab that is in front of him.

At this, a crumb goes the wrong way in Evie's pretty throat, and she is compelled to stifle a shriek of laughter with her handkerchief.

Just here the conversation is interrupted by Mr. Steinbergh rising suddenly and saying: "I see on the veranda a gentleman to whom I wish to speak. Will you excuse me a few minutes? It is a matter of some importance to me."

And he follows a party who had just passed them, the leader of which has bowed to him.

Gazing after him carelessly, Evelyn notes that he addresses a gentleman and a young lady who are just about entering a carriage to drive away.

A minute after the financier returns. "You'll pardon me," he remarks, "but it is a gentleman whom I have just met, who is a stranger in New York, and one I shall perhaps see during the winter in Washington. He is the senator-elect from Populoso."

"Doctor Guernsey?" ejaculates Evelyn, suppressing, by an effort, a little startled cry.

"Yes, you know him?"

"Oh, no, but I have of course read his name. Besides, he is the gentleman who has purchased my portrait that Amadie painted."

"Ah, then you should meet. If he admired the likeness what effect would the original produce upon him?"

"Or his wife; he! he! he!" giggles La Tolle-mache.

"She's a pretty, brown-haired young thing. I lorgnetted her as she passed by," remarks Miss Atherton. Then she adds sadly: "I always pity the wives of celebrities. They have the bone so many other women long for."

"That doesn't apply in this case. The senator is not married. The lady with him is, I believe, his sister," says the host, as coffee and cigars make their appearance, and the gentlemen go to smoking at this open air, free and easy dinner.

A few minutes after, Von Spitzer, who is ambitious to do his share of the hospitality with his complimentary box, suggests Koster & Bial's, and they drive down in the early evening through Central Park and along Fifth Avenue to Thirty-fourth Street, where that home of vaudeville is at this time in full and triumphant blast.

Von Spitzer's box is pleasantly located, number two from the proscenium arch on the second tier. The one between it and the stage is occupied by three or four Western gentlemen, who are escorting three or four ladies of somewhat shady reputation and great beauty, vivacity and *elan*, especially when inspired by champagne, which is apparently served every moment by a fly-about German waiter. As the performance proceeds the voices of these gentlemen grow louder and are easily audible in the Steinbergh *loge*.

The house is full, boxes and all, of the usual conglomerate audience that assembles at this house of entertainment—men about town, girls about town, actors, musicians, and the general public, including a few society ladies who sit in retired nooks of their boxes, permitting their escorts to occupy the front and conspicuous places, and enjoy the performance, which is a very good one in its way.

"The bill is a fine one to-night," remarks Von Spitzer, looking over the programme. "Miss Vesta Empire is going to sing 'Daddy Will Not Buy Me a Bow-Wow,' and the orchestra are to accompany her with the barks and growls of dogs. Rather a new idea and beastly degrading to the musicians. It would not

surprise me if the orchestra struck. Blöwenheim, the conductor, declares that if it were winter and the Metropolitan were open, they would, but during the summer engagements are scarce. Ah, he sees me! He will probably come up, and his woes will amuse you during the intermission."

Evie has no ears for this. The conversation of the Western gentlemen in the box next to hers is exciting her interest and attention.

"It was the slickest election I ever seed," remarks one of them. "Doc Guernsey went through that legislature like four-year-old whisky! It was a he old fight, and we never used a single cent to bribe 'em."

"And your man from Populoso got elected and didn't spend a cent? "I'll believe that," says the other, when these fairies here"—he indicates the ladies in their box—"refuse wine!"

"Which they won't do while you have a bill in your pocket," laughs one of the fair ones addressed. "Waiter, another bottle! Fizz!—scoot—bang! A-a-ah!"

"Yes," repeats the first speaker, "we did it without a red cent. You see, Guernsey and his crowd control the Stock Exchange out there. I handled the matter—did the patriotic—told our party in the Legislature that we wouldn't buy 'em; that it was against our principles to *buy* anything, but that we would give 'em a hint that would permit 'em to make a good deal more money than they could get any other way, and that was to buy Onyx mining stock at a hundred dollars a share; we would fix it with the brokers so they would carry it for them—'buyer 30.' They jumped us, and we fixed each one of 'em by a hundred shares of stock—'Buyer 30'—then we hoisted the stock up to three hundred dollars."

"How grateful they were to us. Twenty thousand

dollars apiece on paper, Onyx was 320 bid, and they were so happy—all except Bullem, who had insisted upon cash, so we had given Bullem eighteen hundred. So at four they caucussed and nominated Guernsey, and at eleven that night they elected him, and every one of the critters held on to his stock. At twelve at night we got Bullem drunk and abstracted his eighteen hundred, and he hasn't dared to tell any one about it. And the next morning, at the opening of the Board, Onyx fell to ninety dollars first sale, and now the Legislature are hunting Board 'Buyer 30.' I reckon when Guernsey wants a reelection he'll have to make it a cash transaction."*

"Well, if I know Bob Bullem, he may make trouble about that. He's not a man to stand by and see eighteen hundred dollars go out of his pocket without letting some one know it. Has Guernsey any idea of the cash transaction?"

"Not a word. Guernsey is a man of the strictest probity and the highest honor. He absolutely refused to put up a cent. The eighteen hundred was advanced to Bullem by a man who intended to get it away from him as soon as the election was over. Guernsey, however, remarked that he did not object to the legislature speculating if they were cute enough to make money by it. You see, Guernsey is a man of Yale training, mellowed and expanded by Western life. Gee Wiz! look at that girl on the stage, ain't she a per-simmon? Wouldn't she get the silver dollars thrown on the stage to her out in our camp? Here's some of mine, sissy," and the Westerner dives his hand into his pocket and a silver shower descends upon the young

* For further details of this peculiar manner of effecting a senatorial election read the editorials of the Carson City, Nevada, newspapers after the extraordinary fall in Ophir on the San Francisco Stock Board in 1876.—THE EDITOR.

lady who is singing "Daddy Will Not Buy Me a Bow-Wow," the orchestra growling and barking in a most savage German manner, as they play the accompaniment to the chorus.

Then intermission comes mingled with the strains of the Hungarian band upstairs, and the leader of the orchestra flies excitedly up to tell his woes to Von Spitzer, the critic.

Too excited to think of anybody else in the box, Herr Blowenheim wipes the perspiration from a high, romantic German brow, and ejaculates: "*Gott in Himmel!* Did you see zat outrage? My orchestra required to growl and bark like bow-wows, and *doing it!* I myself had to imitate a Siberian wolf hound. But it ees ze last! I will stand no more! My orchestra has been required to make themselves jokes for comedians, to answer stupid questions put to zem from the stage, to cheer, to applaud, to dodge ze conjurer when he pretends to let ze cannon ball fall on zem, to permit the ventriloquist to squeeze his accursed manikin and squirt water all over zem! *Spitted at by a lay figure!* And we are musicians—we who can play Wagner at sight! What haf we come to?"

"Five dollars a night, I imagine," laughs Von Spitzer. "That's the price, isn't it?"

"But I must be going. Ladies, I drinks your healths," replies the German musician. "Frauleins, I know your beautiful eyes look in pity on my poor orchestra and me. In the next act a young lady music hall singer will come, and will stand over the footlights and will make loaf to me in her brassy, London way, until I blush mid shame as I tink of my poor wife at home, and yet I will have to pretend to be coy and look at her as if I loafed her, and say, 'Ah, there!' and 'Oh, my!' and 'You're as pretty as a picshurë!'

and 'I would like to *kees* you!' which always makes the house scream with laughter—though, *Mein Gott!* I am an artist and this is summer!"

With this, Herr Blöwenheim flies away to his dismal duties, muttering to himself, "Sumer day zer will be a discord!"

But Evie heeds not this. She is listening to the conversation of the two gentlemen in the next box, which has grown low and confidential, but as it is right at her ear she does not miss it. They are uninterrupted in their conclave, as the ladies in their party are devoting themselves at present entirely to the champagne, which is still flowing with steady pop and gurgle.

"You say Bullem is going to make trouble about that matter? Why doesn't Guernsey shut him off?"

"He won't! He says it's against his principles. He never gave a cent to bribe a man in his life, and he never will. Guernsey is as noble a specimen brick as ever trod the Senate from the West. Look at him! Not one dollar did he put up. Not one man is a cent *richer* for voting for him. That's more than can be said of most any other Senator that has been elected from our section since I was knee-high to growing corn! And look at his private life. No woman ever came within four hundred and seventy-five feet of getting the grip on Guernsey."

"That's because his affinity hasn't come along."

"Reckon you're right," laughs the other. "There's a girl made for every fellow, and some of them has a good many *extrees*. But I'll venture this, that if Doc Guernsey ever gits in love, a prairie afire won't be nothing to him. He's no man of half measures, he ain't."

"Risin' forty and never been in the tender?" queries the first in an incredulous voice.

The answer that comes astonishes Evie.

"Oh yes he is. He's devoted to his sister, and not much to wonder at. She's the finest of the fine between the Missouri River and the Sierras. Mattie Guernsey's been educated in a St. Louis seminary, and can discount a duchess on etiquette, and give points to a French Profess' on playing the piano."

"Then you think if he were in love, he'd be a wild one?"

"You bet! He's unplowed ground, he is, and would bring up a fine crop of emotional insanity."

"Well, he'll get a good chance at it in Washington," is the reply. "But I understand Guernsey is going to spend a month or two at Saratoga. The girls will break him in there. Speaking of girls, that's a fine-looking one in the box opposite. Seems to me the diamond on my shirt front has caught her."

With this the party speaking levels an opera-glass at the beauty across the theater, and forgets, in the contemplation of her loveliness, to continue the conversation.

Just at this moment a few words from her own box wafted to Evie's ears obliterate even Guernsey from her mind.

Flora Atherton is speaking.

"You say, Von Spitzer," remarks the comedienne, "that men only get curious names at college. Don't you think that girls have curious names also? Talk about your Beef Wheelers, Doggy Trenchards and Buck Thorns—I once knew a girl we called French Eva."

With a start Evelyn looks at the sad comedienne and forces memory backward; then suddenly she murmurs under her breath: "*Sallie!*" but by an effort restrains herself from making recognition at the moment.

"Miss Atherton wouldn't care," she thinks bitterly,

"to have these gentlemen bowing before her pretty feet, guess that she had been an *élève* of the Shepherd's Fold—neither would I. Now I know where the startled-deer expression in her eyes comes from and to whose hands she owes that nervous timidity of manner and dodge-before-you're-hit skip, that has made her crying *ingénues* such howling successes."

Then suddenly it flashes through her mind: "Perhaps Sallie can tell me what became of my sister!" and she seeks an immediate chance to ask the question.

A moment after Mr. Steinbergh suggests supper, which project is immediately supported by Von Spitzer, who says in a frightened tone of voice: "The living pictures are coming; let us go!"

"You don't approve of that style of art, Mr. Von Spitzer?" says the capitalist, laughing.

"Art!" shrieks the critic. "Don't insult art by applying it to them. What are their nudes—silk tights! Who can get flesh tints out of silk tights?"

"Good gracious! you wouldn't have them without silk tights? He, he, he!" giggles La Tollemache from the back of the box.

"Yes, I would! Art is art and flesh tints are flesh tints. Art must be supreme. Art is above morality! Art is above decency! *Art!* ART!" mutters the excited German.

"Then let us fly from your abomination," remarks Steinbergh.

With this the party rise.

A few minutes after they find themselves very comfortably seated at supper in the Arena. During this meal Mrs. Montessor has no chance of private converse with Miss Atherton. But as they come out to their carriages on Thirty-first street, just at the doorway, a creature of big frame, but shrunken appearance, clad in the seediest and shiniest of dilapidated black

clothes, with an electric battery, ornamented by jingling bells, slung over him, suddenly runs up to them, and, extending the handles of the machine right in Miss Atherton's face, cries out:

"Shock, miss? Only ten cents for an electric shock!"

Gazing at him under the arc-lights, the comedienne gives a faint shriek and almost faints into Von Spitzer's ready arms.

"What is the matter? Get away from here!" cries Claude, angrily.

"I won't move on unless I get a dollar. That's ten cents a shock for the whole party. SHOCK, SIR?"

"Here's a dollar, and I'll get a policeman if you don't move on," replies Steinbergh, excitedly. "You have frightened the lady, sir."

"Won't you take it out in shocks? I like to earn my money. I'm Electricity Joe. This isn't my regular stamping ground; the Bowery's the place I'm best known. Won't you take a ten-cent shock? Won't you take it out in trade? You won't? *Must* I move on? Then I'll *move*!"

And the creature goes shuffling away as they assist Flora into a carriage.

"What does she mean by mumbling so?" ejaculates Von Spitzer. "I've a mind to go after that wretch and break his back."

But certain words have come to Evie from the comedienne that make her anxious to interfere. She says: "Yes, go after him, Von Spitzer; break his back! I'll take Flora home. She's sick. The wear and tear of this season on the stage have been too much for her."

"Can't I accompany you?" volunteers Steinbergh.

"No; I'll go with her—only I." She steps into the carriage, while Steinbergh gives the address to the

hack driver. "She's better now. Go away, all of you."

And the carriage drives off, with Evelyn Montessor gazing at Flora Atherton, who is muttering to herself: "Mawley! *Mawley!* MAWLEY!——"

A few minutes after, by the aid of Evie's smelling bottle, Flora regains her senses, shudders, and says nothing.

"Why did you cry out 'Mawley!' Sallie?" asks Evie, eagerly.

Then, with a start, the comedienne whispers: "You know me?"

"Yes, you are Sallie—Sallie, of the Shepherd's Fold." Then she adds, quietly: "I am French Eva!"

"What! the girl who sold the Bible to give me pie and cake?"

"Yes. Why did you cry out 'Mawley'?"

"Didn't you see him—didn't you recognize him? The man with the electric machine? It was Mawley—*Mawley*—MAWLEY!"

"MAWLEY!" echoes Evie with a suppressed cry. "Oh, how I hope Von Spitzer *did* break his back!" Then she goes on impetuously: "You were at the Fold when I ran away. Sallie, what became of my sister?"

"Mathilde—Mattie—Mignonnette?"

"Yes; that's what I called her—*Mignonnette*. What became of her?"

"I don't know."

"Try and recollect—THINK!"

"I will—give me time. The sight of that man took me back—it's so many years ago. Whenever I think of Mawley I tremble. I wake up now—even now—shrieking and screaming in my bed at night dreaming he is beating me. Evie, how he used to whip me! He didn't you; he was afraid of you. There was always

something of the devil in you that saved you; but I—I was young; I was a child. Mawley had no mercy on the helpless ones."

"But my sister?"

"Let me think, Evie. Come into my rooms with me when we get home. I'll try and remember everything that I can. Only let me get out of the darkness into the light."

This is soon done. The carriage is at Miss Ather-ton's pretty apartment at the Vendome, and assisting her up the stairs Evelyn soon finds herself with her charge in an artistic little parlor brilliantly lighted.

"Now," she says, "Sallie, you are out of the darkness. Mawley is not here. Get your wits together. Tell me of my sister."

"Well, after you had gone—you know that very day you stole the Bible—two gentlemen came in and one of them, the old one, took Mattie in his arms and kissed her, and I—I had never been kissed in my life and I wanted one, and I told the young gentleman who was with him that I had never had a kiss, and he gave me one. The tears came into his eyes and he threatened to chastise Mawley; but the older man—the one with gray hair on his temples—the one who had kissed your sister—restrained the younger. Then they went away, taking Mathilde with them. And then Mawley was like a devil. You remember Annie—poor Annie? I can hear her screams now. Mawley thought no one dare trouble him when *they* had not prosecuted him. But, finally, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children ——"

"Yes, I know all about that," answers Evie; "but my sister?"

"I don't know where they took her. She disappeared after that day."

"Disappeared! Is she dead?"

"How can I tell? I can hardly remember about myself then. All I know is that when the Fold was broken up, kind hands were outstretched to me, and I was given a chance in this world. And, do you know, I believe that Mawley has made my dramatic success. They say I can cry more naturally than any woman on the stage. I can! I simply think of Mawley,——" and tears commence even now to roll down the beautiful actress's fair cheeks. "They wanted me to play Smike in Nicholas Nickleby. My managers said it would be the greatest hit in the world, but I dare not attempt the rôle. I think I would make a success the first night and die of nervous prostration the next day—*for I should live the part!* But where are you going?"

"I'm going after Electricity Joe, that's where I'm going."

"To-night?"

"Now!"

"Alone?"

"Will you come with me?"

"O Heavens, no! How brave you are."

But Evelyn astonishes the actress. She says: "I will forgive him if he tells me where to find my sister!" and runs from the room, going down to the carriage hurriedly. Getting in, she tells the driver to go first to the Arena restaurant; where she had last seen Electricity Joe.

At this place, engaging a District Telegraph boy, she puts him into the carriage with her and pursues the electricity vender, and finally overtaking him on the Bowery, by the electric light interviews him and says: "You know me?"

And he cries: "Shock? Ten cents!"

She says: "I know you!"

"Do you? Shock, ten cents!"

"You are the Reverend Jonas Mawley."

Here Electricity Joe utters a horrible shriek and sets his electric machine in motion, jingling his bells and crying: "No, no, they killed him in prison."

"They did not. You are alive. I am French Eva!"

At this he utters a horrible chuckle and whispers tremblingly: "Don't give me away! I shocked thirty children to death to-day with electricity."

"My sister, Mathilde—you remember her? Little Mattie—*Mignonnette*—you know?" begs Evie desperately and implores him to give her tidings of her loved and lost one!

At which he utters another cry and mutters: "Yes, I shocked her, too."

"Oh, Heavens! Have you no mind?"

"No, but I have a stomach. Ten cents for a shock; please take a shock for ten cents! If you won't take a shock; let the *boy* take a shock! It'll register just how much voltage he can stand *without dying!*"

At this the District Telegraph boy runs away with a cry of terror.

But Mrs. Montessor hardly thinks of the boy. She is muttering hoarsely to herself: "God, in punishing him, has punished me. God, in destroying his mind, has wrecked my last hope of seeing Mathilde again, of knowing whether she is living or dead!"

CHAPTER VII.

"BEWARE OF ALIMONY!"

WITH disappointment in her soul Evelyn reënters her cab, and in a broken voice gives the driver her address.

"It is but another effort that has failed," she mutters. "If he had only had his mind perchance I would have seen my sister's face," then cries with tearless sobs: "Mathilde! Mathilde! I, who should have protected you, deserted you. But I couldn't bear to stay to be beaten. You'll remember that, darling, and forgive me!"

But, forced by very impotency to be stoical on this matter, after a time the fair wanderer brings herself to calmness, just as the carriage stops.

Entering her apartment Evie finds, to her astonishment, Claude and Von Spitzer making a very comfortable time of it over a bottle of champagne and cigars of exquisite aroma. "Who has paid for it?" she wonders. She knows the critic has not.

But this is elucidated, she thinks, by Claude's opening remarks.

He says: "Steinbergh was here and waited to find out if Miss Atherton had got to the good again, but you were so long coming old Jelly Trust was compelled to leave, so Heinrich and I have been consoling ourselves——"

"For the absence of beauty with the presence of wine," interjects Von Spitzer effusively. "How is the charming Miss Flora? Oh, it was cruel, cruel, not to let me accompany you to her home."

"Oh, Flora is entirely recovered," replies Evelyn lightly. "A mere attack of the nerves, and your presence I am sure would have agitated her."

This remark puts the critic in happy and triumphant mind. He says: "*Mein Gott!* the divine comedienne! It is well I did not go. Her tears of pathos would have driven me distracted. But good-night, Mrs. Montessor, I kiss your sweet hand for your attentions to Flora. *Auf wieder sehen*, my Claude, many thanks for the champagne and cigars," and departs, leaving Evelyn wondering: "Can it be possible that my husband has money in his pocket?"

She puts this thought aside, remembering Steinbergh has been there, and imagining that Mecænas must have purchased the entertainment.

The next morning, however, financial shock comes to her. Signor Amadie not making his appearance with her half of the thousand dollars, she writes the Italian a little note asking him if he will please send it to her.

This the artist answers breathless and in person, crying as he comes in: "*Dea mia*, do you want all for which I sold the picture? Is art to have nothing and beauty everything?"

"No, but beauty wants her half."

"That I have already given you."

"Given me? Impossible!"

"Certainly, through your husband. I gave it to him yesterday. I was coming back with it. At the door he met me. I said, 'It is the price of your wife's sittings for me. Would you be kind enough to hand it to her!' And he said he would with a grand deal of pleasure."

"The miserable!" cries Evie. "Now I know where the cigars and champagne came from. The sybarite! the drone——"

"Where is he?" cries the artist, "the embezzler,

the defaulter. For this crime he shall answer to me, Amadie, the Italian !”

“That is impossible,” answers Evelyn. “Mr. Montessor is at present away, *spending the money*. I know him. Too well I know him !” and she clenches her hands and bites her lips until the blood comes, for this is a mishap almost fatal to her plan. “It is twenty to one,” she continues, “that Claude is at the Coney Island Jockey Club backing the favorites;” then ejaculates eagerly : “God grant that he wins !” next sighs, “but Claude is a *bad* gambler. Go away, Amadie, I am broken-hearted.”

“You will sit for me once more ; I will paint a great picture—the Goddess of Revenge, shedding tears over losing it.”

“Yes, I might as well do that as fret my heart out here, waiting for him.”

So she spends part of the afternoon at the studio of the Italian, where he outlines a picture that may some day make him famous.

“We will get more than a thousand dollars for this,” remarks Amadie, as she finishes the sitting. “Where are you going now ?”

“To see how Flora Atherton is to-day,” Evie replies. “She was suffering from nervous prostration last night.”

“Ah, the beautiful, yet sad, comedienne. I have longed for her face. If I could put it on canvas, if I could catch the smile and the tear together. *Gran Dio!* what a superb picture ! An ideal of the naughty girl stealing the cherries and caught at it ! I will accompany you,” suggests the artist in his off-hand, foreign way, not thinking it necessary to be asked.

Half an hour afterwards they are at the Vendome, where, to Amadie’s disgust, the actress’s maid informs them that Miss Atherton is indisposed but will see Mrs. Montessor.

"I will come back for you in half an hour. Cheer her up and get her to see me. If she will not sit for me I will catch her face as I look at it. I must have those eyes. You say something that makes her cry, and I will catch the tear and will bless you!"

A minute after Evelyn is ushered into the actress's pretty parlor and there received by Miss Atherton, who, in a delicate teagown, looks distressed beauty idealized.

"I had an awful night of it," she says, with a pathetic *moue*. "I dreamt of *him*! And you had the courage to go after him? Did you see him?"

"Yes," replies Evie sadly, "but Mawley's mind is gone, he has no memory. I could learn nothing of my sister. Can't you recollect something more of—of *Mignonnette*?" and tears gleam in the lovely blue eyes.

"Nothing. I tried to think and that brought on my nightmare. Oh, it was awful! I had a nerve-stretching dream. I dreamt I was back at the Fold; I dreamt I was hungry; I dreamt you stole four bibles; then I dreamt Mawley shocked us all with electricity; and then I shrieked—oh, how I shrieked! The house porter came up. The people in the adjoining apartments flew out of their rooms. It was about as bad as an alarm of fire. But you don't look well, Evelyn—you'll let me call you Evelyn?"

"Yes, but I won't call you Sally, because you have another name—Flora. How did you get it?"

"Oh, my *nom de théâtre*. Sallie Brackett isn't as alluring on posters as Flora Atherton. After the Fold, kind people took me. I was brought up even as one of them. I shared their little. But they have passed away and left me to fight my own battle with the world; and Mawley has helped me to do it. And you, Evelyn, what became of you when you ran away?"

"I don't know. I was half crazy!" mutters Mrs.

Montessor, a hunted look coming into her blue eyes. "All I thought of was to get as far as possible from Mawley. Somehow I wandered to Fourteenth street. The flaming gas jets of a theatre caught my eye and announced French Opera. I heard *French!* the language that I loved, the tongue that had been spoken to me in Paris, when I was rich and happy, and had loving kindness and a father's care, and it seemed to me the sounds of home. In America I had been treated as a pauper; English was to me a cruel tongue, French the language of kindness. I followed some chorus girls, listening to their Parisian *argot* that gave me hope. Into the stage door I went with them and there I believe I fainted from hunger, from weakness. If you want *quick* charity turn to the theatrical profession. They haven't much, but they'll give you what they've got. I was revived, I believe, with champagne from a neighboring saloon, and fed on free lunch from the same hospitable counter. The prima donna made a pet of me. A Frenchwoman always loves one who can speak her language when she is away from home. I jabbered baby French to her and caught her heart. She tried my voice, and I soon sang small parts in the opera, but I would not leave this country to go to Paris with her a few years afterward, because I wanted to find my sister. She was in America; that was my only chance of seeing Mathilde again. I could not destroy it. So I remained here, went on the concert stage—not in New York, but in small places. On one of these tours I met Claude. He was the accompanist. You know he does a little of everything. He acts *badly*, plays *badly*, paints *badly*, but he does them *all!* Well, you know his lion head. I was very young, I felt lonely, Claude felt lonely. One day he said, 'Suppose we are lonely together?' So we were married. The concert tour was my honeymoon; the return from it an awakening

Claude is susceptible. He loves devotedly, but not for long. So, *voilà!* behold me!"

She has hardly finished when Signor Amadie is announced. "You'll see him a few minutes, won't you?" asks Evie. "You know he painted my picture."

"Oh, that beautiful one!" replies the actress. Then she adds: "I wish he would paint mine."

"He will, bravo! he will," cries Mrs. Montessor, clapping her hands. "You'll see him for a few minutes to arrange the sittings, won't you? He's the nicest little Italian fellow in the world. His heart is as soft as his brush."

"Yes, if he will promise to paint me."

"I guarantee it."

A minute after, with his best bow the Italian comes in and is presented.

"I promised Flora," remarks Evelyn, "that if she would receive you this afternoon you would paint her portrait. Will you do it?"

"Will I not? Let me put you two in a group, ah-h! an inspiration—a *group!* The Goddess of Revenge looking down at her victim. They will shrink from your great eyes, Madame Montessor, but Ha, ha, ha! How they will laugh at the victim. Or better still, a home group—the clandestine marriage. One sister letting the cat out of the bag on the other!"

At this they burst into laughter, and a moment after Evelyn takes the artist away, for she sees that Flora needs rest.

To-day is the beginning of a charming friendship between these two.

So the little Italian accompanies Mrs. Montessor to a quiet dinner at the Café Martin, where Evie from an adjoining table hears some things that make her grind the pearls she calls teeth over her *entrée*.

"You should have seen La Tollemache play the

paces to-day," remarks a sporty-looking man to his *vis-a-vis* who is equally sporty in appearance. She was backing the favorites and losing her money."

"*Her* money?" says the other. "She hasn't got any."

"Well then, *his* money. Whenever little Tollemache won she pocketed the stakes, and *he* always bought the tickets."

"So she's caught a backer."

"I should say so. He's probably an English lord or a dude. He's as chappie a young fellow as ever sucked a cane or turned up his pants!"

And the gentleman gives a short but graphic description of Mrs. Montessor's absent lord and master.

Little Amadie does not understand to whom this conversation refers as he has never heard of Miss Tollemache. He, however, notes that his companion is nervous, perchance unhappy.

"You are thinking of your loss?" he says.

"Yes I want to meet him," she answers almost savagely. "Perhaps he's at home now, come!" and taking the Italian's arm Evie walks to her apartment with a step that bodes no good to Claude Auchester Montessor when his pretty wife meets him.

But Claude is still absent and Amadie leaves her to her reflections which are many, various, good, bad and indifferent; but all center on one point, the campaign she has planned—and the sinews of war to carry it out.

This gloomy reverie is broken in upon by a District Telegraph boy, who hands her a letter.

Tearing it open, she reads:

MY DEAR MRS. MONTRESSOR: If you have another of the Impressionist's pictures left, I have room for it upon my wall. Something lurid would relieve the monotony of the old masters. I saw a "sunset" on your easel.

Yours sincerely,

AUGUST MORRIS STEINBERGH.

"The generous fellow!" she murmurs; "he has heard of my husband's speculation from Amadie."

Ten minutes after Claude's easel has no picture upon it. "Sunset" is packed and forwarded to the kindly financier, with this note:

MY DEAR MR. STEINBERGH: Instead of giving me the money for this picture, which, understand me, is worth no more than the others, would you kindly invest it for me? Couldn't you take a 'flier'—I believe I use the right term—in some stock or bond, something that you know will go up and something you are sure will not go down? Give me the benefit of your financial brain, come and see me, and receive the thanks of

Yours most gratefully,

EVELYN MONTRESSOR.

"Yes, that is better," she thinks. "One hundred dollars is nothing to me. I will need thousands to make my *coup*. That worthless Claude has perhaps ruined my chances of senatorial speculation."

A few minutes after the worthless Claude presents himself in very bad humor. The betting ring at the Coney Island Jockey Club has not produced good results either upon his pocket or his temper.

"Where the devil is my picture?" he growls, looking around for something to find fault with.

"Where it should be—*out of sight*."

"Yes, it is out of sight," he answers; "out of sight as a work of art. I noticed it turned upside down, that you had labeled it 'Sunset.' Right side up it was commonplace, but upside down it was grand, the work of a genius. After this I paint on my head. And what have you done with this *chef-d'œuvre*!"

"What have you done with my money?" she says. "The five hundred dollars Amadie gave you to give to me. Answer me that!"

"I will!" he returns shortly. "I have ventured it and lost it."

"What! *All* of it?" There is pathos in her cry.

"Yes, every red cent. Oh, you needn't look at me in that way," he goes on. "I know it's pathetic. But it belonged to me. In the first place, it is the price for loaning your beautiful features for Amadie's canvas. Those features became mine when you married me. In the next place, it is only taking the money that belongs to me for the five pictures of my genius—my genius, Madame, that you sold to Steinbergh at a hundred dollars apiece. Ah! that hit you, didn't it? You didn't guess that I could make Von Spitzer gossip over a bottle of champagne, did you? You think your husband's a fool, don't you?"

"I do indeed, Claude," she says, looking him straight in the face. "Because now I am going to tell you my little plan."

"What is it?"

"TO-MORROW I AM GOING TO DIVORCE YOU."

"*What!*"

"And you are going to let me do it."

"You—you don't mean it!" stammers the young man, gazing at the beauty that he feels may now be his own no longer,—at the sunny hair, lovely indignant eyes and exquisite though trembling figure that stands before him, and feeling that blessings brighten as they take their flight.

"Every word of it! and you are going to make no defense in the action."

"Why not? You're deucedly mistaken if you don't think I will my lady," mutters Claude bitterly.

"No, you are not! If you do, beware of alimony! If you consent, no alimony! If you contest, I shall demand all a jury or a judge will give me in my distress—and I can look very beautiful in court, my Claude!" she adds with a slight laugh.

Gazing at her he knows she can; as she stands there graceful, appealing, clinging loveliness in every glance,

in every pose. He literally shudders when he thinks of her effect upon a jury.

"Why—I—I never earn much money," he falters, "It's your—your singing, Evie, that has kept the wolf from the door."

Which in truth it has, for Evelyn's concerts through New England and certain parts of the West where *Chica* is a local favorite have kept Claude from financial ruin.

"Yes, that is true, but will not be believed by the Court. A man is always supposed to be the breadwinner. I shall prove through Von Spitzer, George Coppée and other critics, that you have publicly stated to them many, many times that your salary was two hundred and twenty-five dollars a week when you were on the stage."

"Twenty-five dollars, you mean," gasps Claude growing pale.

"It was twenty-five, but you always said two hundred and twenty-five. I know enough about juries to know that I will get great alimony from you, and as you won't work and can't work, you will be put in prison. That's what they do with husbands who don't support their poor divorced wives. There are many in Ludlow Street Jail now. Ask them about alimony! See what they think about alimony! The Court directs you to pay it, and if you don't you are arrested for contempt, sir, and jailed. Think how happy you'll be behind the bars, my Claude, for you never can earn the alimony I shall get from you. And into prison you will go. Our marriage was at best a frivolous affair, made when I was in love with you, but that seems ages ago—made when I thought your soul shone through your eyes, and that you were as you look—NOBLE! But now I will be free from you. No, you needn't implore, you need not beg; seek comfort from La Tollemache, go to your Carrolia Guissipé!

For you and I are things apart from now on forever."

"You have some great idea; you want to be free from me! Good God! I understand now. You—you are going to marry Steinbergh!" he shrieks with such ferocious emphasis as this idea flies into his brain, that she bursts out laughing and can't answer him for a moment.

"No, not Steinbergh," she finally mutters. "One fling of the matrimonial dice is enough for me—at present. That's all. Some women would lie to you, and tell you, my Claude, that they do it because you have broken their hearts, but I tell you that my heart is not broken, thank God; I still have a heart and conscience, and I don't want to feel that I'm going to love another and make another love me when I have a husband that a sickly sentimentality might make the world think I was wronging."

"You're going to love another—you are going to make another love you? Who the deuce is he?" snarls Claude in savage astonishment.

"My senator!" she says, airily, then goes on laughingly: "Well, I've told you sufficient—more than perhaps policy would permit me to tell to a man who is now, with me, a rank outsider. Is it divorce without contest and without alimony, or is it divorce with contest and with alimony, and my poor, little Claude behind the bars of Ludlow Street Jail because he won't pay his poor, little wifey some of the great money the judge thinks his dramatic abilities command? Which is it, *mon cher*—am I free?"

"Free!" gasps the man with rueful voice.

"Very well," she says, "then Mr Claude Auchester Montessor, will you kindly oblige me by leaving *my* apartment. It is later than I generally receive visitors."

“ *Your* apartment ? ”

“ Certainly, I pay the rent for it—the furniture was bought by my money. *Au revoir*. You may expect the “summons and complaint” to-morrow morning at the address to which I shall order your trunk sent! Good-by. What, won’t shake hands ? ”

And Claude Auchester Montessor staggers out of the rooms muttering to himself: “By the Lord Harry, she’s a wonder!”

In the street he pauses and wipes his brow as if dizzy and stunned, then gazing up at the windows of the room he sees a shadow thrown upon the blind, and thinking of the beauty that once was his—and will be his no more—Claude shudders and says: “She’ll never forgive;” then mutters savagely these curious but astute words: “Who ever it is, I hate him!”

The next moment, after the manner of such natures, he commences to sob, and falters: “She was the most beautiful woman in the world, and I abused her. She treated me like an angel, and I was a fiend to her, God forgive me!” to which he adds: “Won’t little Tolle-mache he-he-he when she hears this.” and walks away whistling a merry strain from *Il Barbière*.

And the woman; she who had called herself his wife ?

In the room above Evelyn has sunk down sobbing as if her heart would break. She knows that she has given up a worthless thing—but it was *once* hers, *all* hers! She can remember when she thought him noble and true; when she had expected to walk through life by his side.

SHE CAN REMEMBER WHEN HE LOVED HER!

CHAPTER VIII.

BURNING HER BRIDGES.

THE next morning Evelyn, who is a young woman of energy, determination and action, mutters to herself as she partakes of rolls and coffee, "I must burn my bridges behind me," and does so !

Mr. Claude Auchester Montessor gets his papers in the suit of Montessor *vs.* Montessor served upon him with his trunks and other belongings.

And he making no opposition, and the proceedings being hurried along by a very sharp young lawyer who devotes himself to the legalities of Bohemia, a decree is very shortly entered granting the prayer of Evelyn Aubrey Montessor upon statutory grounds, and forbidding the defendant, Claude Auchester Montessor, from ever marrying again in the State of New York—one of the many absurdities, crudities, and cruelties of New York law, whose code has been formed, not for the bestowal of justice, but for the benefit of lawyers.

These legal proceedings, of course, take some little time, and are a heavy strain upon the already diminished resources of the fair plaintiff.

But relief comes to her from an almost forgotten source. One evening Mr. Steinbergh calls upon her. He has in his hand two little pieces of paper; one is an account of certain sales and purchases made in the stock of the Gelatine Trust, the other is a check. The latter of these, with woman's business instinct, Mrs. Montessor seizes and inspects, then gives a faint but prolonged shriek of delight: "Four thousand two hundred and fifty-seven dollars and forty-nine cents ! Oh, man of the touch of gold !"

"No, only with the knowledge of the insider," replies Mr. Steinbergh, laughing. "You asked me to buy for you with your hundred dollars some stock that was sure to go up. Now, I knew of none of that kind; but I was pretty certain that I knew of one that was sure to go down, so I made you a bear. Your claws are now red with the financial gore of the bull. You sold a hundred shares short. Down it went a point, and you sold two hundred shares more short. I made a descending pyramid for you, and there is the result minus commissions. It is a strictly business affair. Do not thank me. If your hundred dollars had been gobbled up by the bull that would have been the last of you in the stock market!"

"But I will, not for the money nor for your great business head, but for your kind heart," she replies, tears of gratitude in her fair eyes.

Looking at her beauty an idea comes into the head of this benevolent financier, who is hated and cursed on Wall street for the financial havoc he has caused, but here appears the very embodiment of urbanity and generosity. Papa Tiger doubtless seems benevolent to his cubs and to his wife, when he brings home the body of a tender Brahmin baby for the family dinner. To the despoiled village he appears a different kind of a brute.

Looking at her, something new comes into Mr. Steinbergh's eyes. He says, suggestively: "You are, I understand, obtaining a divorce from your husband."

"It is already obtained," she answers. "The decree was granted to-day. I am free of Claude forever."

"That is very wise, I think," replies the financier. "Do you spend the summer in Saratoga?"

"Yes, with Flora. We have become chums. Cut off from the love of man, I turn to the friendship of woman."

"Not from the love of *all* men?" queries the Cræsus, playfully. "Not so long as men admire beauty and a good heart."

"You ascribe those attributes to me?" she mutters, opening her eyes.

"Why, you look surprised," he laughs. "Is it wonderful that you should have beauty, or a good heart?"

"Very!" she replies bitterly, "especially the last. My childhood was one of cruelty, my youth—you have seen it—you know what it is—go away, please, good, dear Mr. Steinbergh, I am not at my best now." And she sends the financier from her; for, with a woman's tact, she has noticed a new something in his eyes.

After he has gone, she mutters to herself: "No, no! Not from gratitude; from that least of all! I at least will have at my next wedding—if it ever comes—another honeymoon. Oh, the joy of that time! A fool's paradise, but it was lovely to walk within it!"

Then she thinks: "But I did right; I have cut Claude forever out of my life, I have burned my bridges, I have done a wise thing."

Has she?

Mr. Claude Auchester Montessor may be divorced, but he is not thrown off. He has a clinging nature, and begins to love the one he has lost, once more. He goes about among Evelyn's friends as a wronged man; he poses as a broken-hearted, cast-off husband. To such an extent does he carry his melancholy that he even gains the sympathy of Von Spitzer, who breaks out at Evelyn one evening as he brings her back from a visit to Flora Atherton.

"For God's sake, why don't you have some mercy for that poor devil, who is breaking his heart for you?"

"Who do you mean?" asks Evie, opening her eyes quite widely.

"Why, Claude, of course. Why don't you let him visit you once in a while?"

"He does!" says Evelyn, curtly.

"When?"

"Every day! He comes at two o'clock, he says for old time's sake. He looks so miserable I haven't the heart to tell him to never show his face again. I know I'm a fool for it, but I once loved him. I know I should cut him off remorselessly, but I haven't done it. Fool! Dolt! Idiot, that I am," she goes on in self-reproach.

And Evie is right in regard to this; for Claude, having once got into the habit of dropping in upon his ex-wife, hangs around his ex-fireside with a much greater devotion than he ever did when it was his by right. Some men always appreciate so much more what does not belong to them than that which they have.

Were Evelyn to show signs of falling in love with another man, or marrying again, Claude Montessor is of that peculiar material that would make grand scenes, and play Iago parts with great expression, some subtlety, and a prodigious, easy-going malice. He would not put Othello up to murder, but he might incite him to savage jealousy and relentless persecution.

As it now stands, Claude does the persecuting himself. He drops in at Evie's on afternoons, when she entertains a few of her chosen intimates with tea, gossip, and other feminine comforts, and stands lounging about, looking at the armchair he once occupied as lord and master, and sighing so deeply that some of Mrs. Montessor's old friends look reproachfully at the ex-wife; for Claude has very handsome eyes, a noble forehead, and a way of tossing his sunny curls from off it as if he were a lion in distress—a style of playing that goes very well with the fair sex, as Mr. Montessor knows.

"It has been the lesson of my life," he whispers, confidentially, to Flora Atherton. "I admit I was wild—gay—reckless; but I never thought she would have done this to me. I couldn't have done it to her."

"You love her still?" whispers Flora, sympathetically.

"With my heart, with my life, with my soul! How I have worked for that woman! Every dollar I have earned in the world was hers—to throw away. And now—now—now! It's hard lines on a boy, isn't it? Never treat Von Spitzer so after you have made him happy."

This last with a little giggle that loses him the actress's sympathy and makes her hate him, for she doesn't love Von Spitzer, though she finds his company pleasant and his praise very agreeable reading in the morning papers.

So Claude gets in the habit of hanging around until all the rest have left Mrs. Montessor's pleasant parlor. This one day produces an awful interview.

"Why don't you go with the rest?" remarks Evelyn, inhospitably.

"I would like another cup of tea."

"With pleasure. Will you go then?"

"I can't when I think of old times."

"You'll have to. I have an engagement to dine with Mr. Steinburgh."

"Ah—h!"

"Why don't you take Miss Tollemache out to dinner? She's probably hungry by this time."

"That's all over." This in a sepulchral voice.

"Since when?" This is an incautious question, and Evelyn knows it the moment it has slipped her pretty lips.

The answer that comes back is an awful one. "Since

you had me forbidden by the courts to marry *again*. Ah, what a cruel wrong! You have had me forbidden to *marry*! I, a man of domestic instincts! I have now no hearth-stone to cling to—I, who can never marry!”

“Go over to Jersey!” says Evie, sharply. “Across the river you can snap your fingers at New York courts.”

The answer that comes shocks her. Claude says in a broken voice: “I haven’t the three cents for the ferry ticket.”

It had never occurred to her that he, cut off from her financial assistance, should be absolutely penniless. She had been accustomed to provide for him before; why should she not assist him now?

“I beg your pardon, my dear Claude,” she answers, trying to turn the matter off lightly, though it affects her more than she wants him to know. “But if you will accept a loan, here are ten dollars,” and with dainty hand extends the bill lightly to him.

The answer that comes shocks her still more. “Couldn’t you make it fifty, Evie?” he says. “You’ve got lots of money I understand. Steinbergh has helped you out in stocks. Couldn’t you make it fifty?”

“Yes, take it!” she ejaculates suddenly, as if anxious to get him out of her sight. And he goes away leaving her almost despising herself and him also. She murmurs: “Degrading myself by giving him money, and he mean enough to take it!”

After this she denies herself to Mr. Montessor when he would call upon her. She has plenty of excuse for this as she is very busy now.

It is nearly the end of June; everybody is flying away from New York heat to green mountains and cool sea breezes. Rooms have been engaged for her and Miss Atherton in Saratoga, at the Windsor,

So, a little before ten one morning, in the heat of that hottest of stations, the New York Central Depot, beneath its burning-glass dome, Evelyn Montessor and Flora Atherton stand, ready to take the Saratoga express.

A little group has gathered to bid them good-by. Von Spitzer, effusive, yet cynical; Amadie, fresh from his canvas, bearing in his hand two bouquets: "One for each of the Group," he says.

"You'll give me a sitting or two, both of you, if I come up to Saratoga, just to put in the finishing touches, just a flash from your sapphire eyes, Madame Montessor; just the ears from yours, Miss Atherton."

"If you're good enough to run up, Amadie, you can paint us as much as you like," replies Flora.

And Evie adds: "A little breeze will do you good. Even your own Naples is never hotter than this," as she fans herself gracefully and languidly, making an exquisite picture in her light summer traveling dress, which is breezy and cool-looking from fluffy parasol to dainty bottines. "You'll be coming up, too, I presume," she says, turning to Mr. Steinbergh, who makes a picture of amiable philanthropy, being laden down by books to read, fruit to eat, flowers to smell, and everything else he can think of to make the railroad journey of the two young ladies a pleasant one.

"Yes, later on, if I can get away from business."

"To which, foolish man, you make yourself the slave," answers Mrs. Montessor, lightly. "If I were in your position somebody else should do the work."

"Ah, then somebody else would take the money," laughs Crœsus. "There are certain things that only I can arrange. If I go for a month to Europe, those awful boys on the Stock Exchange play while the cat's away. But when I come back, ah! the cat—but

I will carry these to your chairs and arrange everything for you. Be sure and don't miss the train. You have only ten minutes."

Evie is rather glad it is only ten minutes, for she sees Claude standing near apparently waiting for his turn to say farewell, which he does in gloomy melodramatic style—with a grand anti-climax at the end.

"You don't ask me to visit you at Saratoga as you did your financier," he whispers pathetically; then breaks out: "But I'm coming up, just the same. And have a care, my lady! Though the courts have made you free from me, I haven't yet given you freedom from my heart. If I find you flirting—as I am sure of," he says ruefully, "look out for me!" This last with a wild roll of the eyes and nasty snarl.

But she answers him: "You will find me flirting, so you can come prepared to make yourself as disagreeable as possible. It's a habit you've got into lately. Between ourselves, I don't think divorce has improved you."

"Undo it."

"Never! But let us part friends."

"Certainly, friends! Couldn't you," he stammers, "couldn't you help me with another fifty? It's the summer season; Steinbergh will buy no more of my pictures. I've painted three upside down for him already, but he doesn't seem to want them."

"Why don't you go to work?"

"Work! How? Act in summer? There are no companies. Would you condemn me to the horror of continuous performances? Would you like to see my name announced as a roof garden fiend?"

He utters this so dolefully that Evelyn bursts out laughing as she passes the ticket taker and is delighted to see that he refuses to let Claude pass after her.

A minute later she finds herself with Miss Atherton

in the parlor car. Mr. Steinbergh has arranged their belongings. He is talking to a gentleman whom Evie has not seen before.

He turns to her and says : "You have never met this gentleman, have you, Mrs. Montessoro ?" laughingly.

"No, I don't—re—remember," stammers Evie, for the introduction is a strange one.

"But he has seen you," chuckles the financier. "I suppose he looks at you every day. Sometimes I presume he thinks he owns you. He is the gentleman who has purchased your portrait, the one Amadie painted. Mrs. Evelyn Montessoro, permit me to introduce a gentleman who is already interested in you—the Honorable Mr. Guernsey of Populoso !"

And Evelyn is staring straight in the face for the first time of—"HER SENATOR."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SARATOGA EXPRESS.

The gentleman she is gazing at says "I am pleased to meet you—but how warm you look!" A bright flush is on Evie's fair face, for it has been a surprise, almost a shock to her to suddenly encounter this man who has been the object of her serious thoughts for months—the man she has sworn to herself to make her football in the game of fortune—even to his own undoing.

But as she looks at him a sudden thought flies into her mind: "CAN I?"

For James Bertram Guernsey has a face that for one moment makes her think that if there is any football kicking to do he will be the one to do it. And she cogitates rather ruefully: "If he kicks, he'll kick hard."

Then, though she is talking to him all the time and telling him she is delighted to encounter a man on a summer train overloaded with women, she is studying his face.

She sees a massive forehead; eyes that are bright and flashing but cautious, an under jaw of bulldog firmness; and fears she can never do it.

Next she looks at his lips and has hope! A heavy mustache just tinged with gray conceals the upper one, but the lower tells the tale—and *she thinks she can!* For though Doc. Guernsey's face exhibits firmness it also suggests a simplicity of nature extraordinary in one who has made his mark in his own locality and has now the chance of making a name in the nation itself. But it is not this that gives her hope; it is the under lip, the bowed yet full under lip, the one

that shows passion yet sensitiveness. It is this lip that tells her that the Westerner at Koster & Bial's spoke the truth when he remarked that Doc. Guernsey was unplowed ground, and would love like a prairie afire.

Even as she thinks this, Mr. Steinbergh is taking his leave and Mr. Guernsey has been introduced to Miss Atherton.

A moment after the train is in motion and with whistle shrieking and bell clanging, runs out of the Grand Central depot into the tunnel towards Harlem. In this uncertain light Evie can no longer study the face of the gentleman who sits just opposite her on the other side of the car.

But if his face is invisible, his voice is open for examination. She listens to his conversation, segregating tone from everything else, and finds that Mr. Guernsey has the voice of a pioneer. His voice is open and frank and generally his speech is low, but there is a ring in it that makes her know that if he opened his mouth he could raise a camp meeting.

"You young ladies are going to Saratoga? So am I. Of course, Mrs. Montessor, I know that you are married, still you'll excuse me calling you young. Out our way the girls never object to it. On the prairies we say, 'Plain truth and no offense, never makes a man draw his gun.'"

"Neither do the girls out our way object to it," laughs Evelyn. "You could even call a Fifth avenue damsel youthful and escape with your life, though she might be dangerous to you in another way."

Her laugh is echoed by a musical guffaw from the gentleman opposite. Then suddenly Guernsey remarks: "Great Scott! There's a baby being spanked."

"No, it was only me *laughing*," giggles Flora.

"Laughing?" mutters the astonished Senator, then

he adds contemplatively: "Would you mind letting me hear you cry, young lady? I think it would be more exhilarating."

At which Mrs. Montessor interjects: "Haven't you seen Miss Atherton on the stage?"

"No; is she an actress?"

"Yes, our most celebrated of *ingénues*. When she cries the house laughs, and when she laughs the house cries."

At which Miss Atherton gives another titter that makes Mr. Guernsey ejaculate in playful voice: "Please don't. I am a humane man and I hate to listen to suffering."

And they all go into another burst of merriment that takes them out of the tunnel and lasts them across the Harlem river where a slight breeze gives them a little relief from the intolerable heat of New York in summer.

A few minutes after they are running up the banks of the Hudson, cooler than ever, happier than ever, and having a jolly time, Flora telling the Honorable Mr. Guernsey that she will cry for him some day, just to make him enjoy himself. On this Doc. Guernsey looking at her thinks her pale beauty very engaging, and gazing at her fair lips does not guess that he has given them the first kiss they have received on earth—but that was a long time ago.

Then turning his eyes upon the other one, the sunlight coming in upon her fair hair and gilding her exquisite face and graceful figure, Evie seems to his Western soul idealized beauty. He mutters to himself with characteristic pioneer frankness: "Her picture was a wonder; but here nature lays out art."

It is with this in his mind that he startles Evelyn with these words: "You'll excuse my *sir'ing* you up, Mrs. Montessor."

"I? Why, certainly—I—" And blushes—rose-like blushes—add to her loveliness.

"Oh, you needn't be bashful. I have studied you before. You'll pardon my saying that I thought the Italian Amadie was a good artist, and now I know he's a bad one."

"Why, the painting is said to be superb!"

"Yes, but—you'll pardon Western frankness—it doesn't touch *you*. But don't get mad, sissy; you're not offended?"

To this she mutters, "'No!" with drooping head, for as she has looked at his face, which is honest and open, she has become ashamed of the plot in her mind against this gentleman, and would forgive him even now were it not that she remembers his father.

Each time that Sallie laughs it recalls the Shepherd's Fold and Guernsey's father, and Evie's heart hardens to the statesman, though her manner is suavity itself; and she is as kind to him as Eve was when she offered to Adam the apple that she knew would be his ruin and damnation.

And, like Adam, Guernsey promptly accepts the apple. Every smile she gives him, every light laugh of hers, seems to please him more and more. He has a pretty good opinion of himself already—most United States Senators have—but before they have passed Peekskill Doc. Guernsey thinks he is a born fascinator of women. He cannot help it. She makes him think so. It is not his vanity that causes this; it is the brilliant art of a subtle woman, who charms men by making them think they know so much more than she does. She lingers on his words as he tells of the financial situation; she admits that the white metal is the proper medium of exchange, for he is a silver man. When he speaks of Wall street and grinds his teeth, her cherry lips murmur, "Villains! Gold bugs and

blood-suckers!" forgetting poor absent Steinbergh.

Then Eve plays a master stroke. She asks Guernsey WHAT HIS CHANCES ARE FOR THE PRESIDENCY.

"My name has not yet been mentioned," mutters the delighted politician. Then he says, impressively, "I am still the dark horse," and visions of the White House fill his senatorial soul.

In fact, she turns Doc. Guernsey's somewhat hard head with the softest, subtlest feminine flattery that can be given, that of recognition of his gigantic intellect, that of making him think what he doesn't know, nobody knows, that he holds Populoso in the hollow of his hand, and has a political mortgage on the destinies of the whole of the United States.

If she had pretended to love him that would not have inflamed his heart. Other girls had done that before. But Evelyn Montessor has a very bright mind, and it is well stocked with general knowledge. She is indebted also to Mr. Steinbergh's desultory remarks for some cursory political and financial ideas. These she turns to marvelous use, making the United States Senator-elect think that she knows a great deal, but flattering him most craftily by causing him to imagine that she thinks he knows very much more.

It is the way to the hearts of a certain class of men, and no quicker path can be taken by woman. They might turn from a woman's beauty, they might be bored by her love, but they will be fascinated by her deference. It is the masculine love of dominion over women that has displayed itself in one way or another in all lands, in all ages; in the harems of Turkey, in the seraglios of the Persian, in the domination of the German husband, in the stern rule of the Russian lord and master, in the burying of African women when their husbands die, in the burning of Hindu widows on their husband's funeral pyres—a passion that is

implanted in the heart of man and one that the *new* woman herself will never be able to overcome. She may make the *new* man acknowledge her equality, she may, in fact, demonstrate her superiority, but as long as she does not bow down to him either in fact or in pretense, he will never *love* her—*never*—NEVER! Man loves what clings to him, man loves what he supports, man loves what he protects!

But Doc. Guernsey does not analyze his feelings.

They are too pleasant to be dissected. Who ever separates the various flavors in strawberries and cream, or segregates the sour from the sweet in lemonade, or the numerous perfumes in an exquisite bouquet?

All Guernsey knows is that somehow the lunch he eats in the dining-car, though a poor one, as is quite usual on the New York Central, is the pleasantest which he has ever eaten. There is music in the air, as he expresses it, sweeter than any brass band. For Doc. Guernsey is not yet become a *habitué* of the opera, and denotes all bodies of musicians producing melody and harmony as "brass bands." He has forgotten his Yale training; he has lived in the West and has become of it. He has assented to its heresies, financial and otherwise; he has accepted its generosity, its grandeur, its know-everything-ness, all in a lump.

Lunch being over, Evelyn devotes herself to amusing him and entertaining herself, for she has grown interested in this gentleman, whom she is flattering. She has bowed down to him until she has commenced to believe that a little of what she has hinted *is true*, that he does know a great deal; for Guernsey talks well from his standpoint, and is already up in half a dozen speeches that he expects to deliver in the United States Senate; a few short excerpts from which he occasionally gives her, in the course of

his conversation, in well-rounded periods and good solid Saxon English.

So the two get to flattering each other, a very pleasant occupation and one that most men and women like. They commence to think well of each other; the time runs into the afternoon very quickly. They are nearing Saratoga.

Then comes the most subtle flattery a man can give to a woman who has "*Mrs.*" as a prefix to her name. Guernsey begins to hint as to Evie's present static domesticity. He does this very delicately, for he has the heart of a gentleman which always carries with it the instincts of one.

"It seems rather curious to call you *Mrs.* Montessor, do you know?" he remarks contemplatively.

"Why not? It is my name."

"Yes, but you seem so young to be married. Your—your husband—" he hesitates a little over the last word—"is coming I suppose often to Saratoga?"

"My husband is a thing of the past."

"You are a widow?" he gasps impulsively—triumphantly.

At the word a wild flush of joy flies over the face of Evelyn. She knows she has him on the hip; she knows if she plays her cards without serious mistake Doc. Guernsey's heart will yet palpitate in her fair hand.

"Yes," she mutters, drooping her head, for a little of the widow's art has come to her with divorce. She hardly looks at him, but is conscious there is a new light in her cavalier's eyes and a flush of emotion apparently joyous, on the Western Senator's cheeks, as he mutters: "A widow—well! well!"

Then she turns the conversation, thinking it is perhaps as well that he does not question her too closely in regard to the death of her ex-spouse, who is at present

attempting to make life easy at Coney Island with the fifty dollars donation she had given him at the New York Central Depot.

"You have never been to Saratoga?" asks Evelyn.

"Once, when I was a boy, but I imagine the place is changed. Besides, things look differently to the eyes of youth," he says with a sigh, for at this moment Doc. Guernsey would almost give up his United States Senatorship to be a few years younger.

The answer of the widow makes him happy. "Pshaw!" she says lightly. "You have not lost the eyes of boyhood. No man has who *pretends* to be old. I suppose, though, an assumption of age is necessary for your dignity as a United States Senator;" then murmurs contemplatively: "The *youngest* member of the body."

"Yes, I'm years ahead of my time in politics," answers the gentleman in confident rapture. "Though I'm a Senator I haven't forgot, thank God, how to be a boy! But where are you going to stay at the Springs?" His tone is eager.

Here the widow suddenly becomes very bashful. "For a few days," she says, hesitatingly, "Miss Atherton and I remain at the Windsor. Afterwards, if we can obtain one, we propose taking a little cottage. You see, having no gentleman with us, we think it would be in better taste not to spend the season at one of the great hotels."

"Yes, much better," he answers. "Two such children as you should not be left to run about alone," then adds, a tone of eagerness in his suggestion: "If you want any masculine advice or assistance, you'll not forget that I am at the Windsor also."

Evelyn looks at him rather archly at this, and Sallie, who has been apparently engrossed in a novel, suddenly ejaculates: "Why, only five minutes ago you

had your baggage checked to the Grand Union! How quick you men change your minds!" A remark that brings a slight flush of embarrassment upon the Senator's cheeks.

"I always change my mind," returns Guernsey, determinedly, "when I find I have made a mistake. I glanced through the guide-book only ten seconds ago and discovered that the Windsor was on a hill. Being a mountain man, I like elevated positions."

Then Evelyn plays another subtle stroke. She replies frankly: "I am glad you do. Will you not, since you are to stay at the same hotel, lend dignity to our table by taking the head of it?"

"Won't I," says the Senator, eagerly. "Don't either of you girls trouble yourselves. I will make all the arrangements. I am here alone, you know. The rest of my family are in Europe."

"Family?" falters Mrs. Montessor.

"Yes, my sister. She sailed two weeks ago. My father—" his tone is reverent and loving, "died last year. Don't trouble yourselves, I am bossing this job, as they say out West."

And he springs up and gives directions with regard to their hand satchels and makes arrangements for a carriage, for the train is already in the Saratoga depot.

Looking at him as he does so, with the energy of youth in his limbs and the flush of delight upon his face, Evelyn Montessor almost repents—but not quite!

She sees the band of mourning upon his hat. "It is for his father," she mutters to herself, and steels her heart against the gentleman who all this afternoon has been trying to make her journey a pleasant one.

But her voice has none of the bitterness of her heart as she replies to Guernsey's cheery "Trot along, girls!" and her eyes gaze innocently into his as he assists her

from the Pullman car, across the platform and into the carriage that he has engaged.

Two minutes after they turn into the main street of the watering-place, and Sallie, who has never seen Saratoga before, shrieks: "Oh, my! a town on a picnic."

And she is right. It *is* a town on a picnic—at least it looks so. The long perspective of green trees running up and down the broad avenue that is lined by gigantic hotels, upon the piazzas of which the orchestras are playing merrily, the dashing equipages filled with ladies in the light toilets of summer with waving parasols and whips bedecked with ribbons—the hub-bub of Broadway transported to green trees and made light, brilliant and almost tropical by soft sunshine and diversified by nearly every type of humanity in the United States. Planters from the South, cattle men from the West, Yankee manufacturers from New England, business men from New York, bookmakers from the race track, invalids for the waters, mingled with beautiful women from everywhere, are punctuated by the woolly heads of hundreds of negroes, the waiters of the great hotels.

From this melange comes up the buzz of happy laughter and eager speech, over all this floats the atmosphere of *sport*. That's what takes the populace to Saratoga—SPORT! The town is always on a picnic.

Dashing up this street, rounding Congress Park with its pagodas, passing the Pompeian House, they turn the corner and draw up in front of the Windsor.

Half a dozen bell boys, each one bearing the traditional dust brush in his jacket pocket, fly down to meet them. In a flash their hand baggage is at the office; two minutes later the ladies have said adieu to Mr. Guernsey and are whisked up in the elevator to their rooms to remove the dust of travel and enjoy a siesta,

At the dinner hour they come down, looking fresher and lovelier than ever, and in the dining room find Mr. Guernsey is a man of his word.

A pretty little table with seats for three has been arranged for them, and they enjoy the excellent cuisine of the hotel, mingled with strains from an orchestra in the adjoining room, and altogether make a pleasant dinner of it.

Afterwards on the veranda the ladies chat while their escort enjoys his cigar. Their conversation is light, flippant, even merry, the Senator telling them some of his famous western stories—a few of them anecdotes of his younger days when buffalo were plenty and Indians still on the warpath. In one of them he chances to mention his father as a man of noble heart, and then could he notice the fair widow's eyes, they would be a warning; but he chats unconsciously on.

The evening is ideal; they are all apparently very happy, though Mrs. Montessoro's speech and manner are more guarded, perhaps more formal than on the train in the afternoon. She keeps her gentleman very deftly at a distance, though in bidding him good evening her eyes droop before the frank expression of his face. His good-natured *bonhomie* and kindly speech affect her more than she likes; for on getting to her own room for the night she has a fearful scene with herself. Conscience smites her very hard.

"It is an ignoble plot," she mutters. "I would spare him if he wouldn't tell me his father was a *good* man! After this I must tutor my face when he mentions that accursed villain!"

As for Guernsey, the effect upon him of the day has been very different. He smokes three cigars contemplatively on the veranda after the ladies have left him, then mutters slowly to himself: "By the Rocky Mountains, she's beautiful as Eve in Paradise! Her face

is like a rosebud, her figure like a—Gee Whizz!”

For Guernsey has a mental souvenir in his eye of an exquisite ankle as he has assisted the fair widow from the train, and he hasn't forgotten it.

Ah! Naughty Evelyn!

CHAPTER X.

"HIS GAL!"

THE next morning the world looks very bright to the Honorable James B. Guernsey as he enters the dining-room to find his breakfast table made very charming by the two graceful young ladies he has escorted from New York, both pictures of summer simplicity, in white dresses and broad sashes, who greet him with unaffected yet kindly good mornings.

But his eye rests not so long upon the drooping loveliness of the actress as upon the vision in pure white; for Evie this day depends for her color effects on her blushing cheeks and blue eyes, which give to her vivacity, playfulness and sometimes, perchance, haughty dignity.

The conversation of the two young ladies is so lively, that Mr. Guernsey forgets to read his paper at the breakfast table, a thing he has not omitted within his memory. News, politics, business, all go out of his head as he listens to his fair companions of the knife and fork. But he has not yet lost his appetite—that, perchance, will come later.

"Well, girls," he says heartily, "as we are out for a frolic and came here to enjoy ourselves, let us throw care to the peacocks outside," pointing to one of the birds of paradise that is strutting over the lawn just across the street, "and *do* the town!"

"I don't think even so rushing a gentleman as you can do Saratoga in one day!" laughs Evie.

"Perhaps not," remarks the Senator, "though Saratoga *did* one of my friends in one night. Will Fisher, the Denver cattle man, fought it out with the tiger, and

returned to Colorado to spend the balance of the summer there. His description of his night at the club here is something terrific, though he only tells the story when he gets drunk."

"Very well, let us do it in sections," remarks Flora.

The other two agreeing to this proposition, as soon as Guernsey has finished his after-breakfast cigar, they stroll over to that peculiar exhibition entitled the Villa of Pansa, a reproduction of one of the Roman houses dug up from the ruins of Pompeii and restored after its burial of eighteen centuries. Filled with ancient statuary and the buried treasures of lost arts, the place looks as real as it did in the time of Titus. And standing by the little fountain in the *atrium*, Evelyn, in her white, almost classic, robe, looks to the Senator as if she were a Roman goddess; and when a Western man's mind gets to weaving the imagery of the ancients and reveling in poetic phantasies, he is in a very dangerous condition.

"Flora, if you only had bare feet adorned by sandals, you would look like Nydia, Bulwer's heroine, the blind girl of Pompeii," remarks Mrs. Montessor, meditatively.

"What, are my eyes so dull?" ejaculates Flora, and her voice has such a plaint in it that Mr. Guernsey bursts into laughter.

"I told you if I cried you'd laugh," murmurs the comedienne, and she gives them a *moue* that sets Evie giggling also.

Then Mr. Guernsey remarks: "After all, a log cabin would be more pleasant to live in than this white marble gilded sepulchre. Did you ever see a more uncomfortable habitation?"

"Yes, ONE!" replies Mrs. Montessor slowly; and getting to thinking of the home his father and Mawley had given to her, despite herself, she favors the affable

Western gentleman with several glances that startle him.

"Great Scott! What have I done to offend you?" he falters.

"You—you laughed at Flora!" she stammers, and bestows on him another savage glare.

"So did you!" he mutters astounded.

"Yes, I permit myself liberties with my friend," she replies, putting her arm around the girl's waist, "that I don't allow to others."

"I see you do," remarks Guernsey; "very pleasant ones."

At this they all burst out laughing.

A moment after their escort, looking at his watch, ejaculates, "How time flies!"

And it has with him, for it is already the lunch hour.

So they walk back to the hotel, and three hours afterwards drive out along the beautiful road to the lake where they take their dinner in the early evening at Moon's, and come back by electric light.

Altogether they have had a very pleasant day of it, at least the Honorable Doc. Guernsey thinks so, though Evelyn has been to him a little more distant than she was during the railway journey, only once or twice very craftily making his heart leap by a veiled glance or two.

"Isn't he splendid?" whispers Flora to Mrs. Montessor as they part at the door of her room. "I—I love him already."

"Do you?" remarks Mrs. Montessor coldly.

"Yes," replies the comedienne impulsively. "He has such a *fatherly* way with him."

"Has he?" murmurs Evie, and goes suddenly into her room. There she mutters to herself: "Has he a *fatherly* way? Not with *me*! To me has come the

widow's instinct. I know I have given him a throb or two;" then sighs: "and I am ashamed of myself for it."

But in the next week Mr. Guernsey gets no evidence of this; though Evelyn's manner is cordial, it is no more, save for an occasional glance that lifts him, as he expresses it to himself in Western fashion, "out of his boots." She accepts his escort to morning concerts at the United States and evening hops at the Grand Union with a frankness and ease that indicates, perhaps indifference, certainly not empressement; still in that *melange* called "*society*" by the loiterers of the Saratoga hotels she accepts no escort but the Hon. James B. Guernsey, United States Senator elect.

As for Miss Atherton, she has already forgotten the fascinations of the art critic Van Spitzer in the attractions and attentions of two or three of the beaux of Saratoga society; among them, young Mr. Slammer, of the Racing Association, who has a *penchant* for the ladies of the stage, and Harry Cordage, of Wall street, who thinks her teary eyes "good things to go long of," as he expresses it.

So the days run along brightly, even pleasantly, until one day Evie gets a shock. This comes, as thunder and lightning are apt to do, from a clear sky.

She has been taking a little morning walk alone and unattended, and has strolled from the Windsor down the hill into Congress Park. Here she is sitting carelessly on a bench listening to a morning concert by the band. There is the usual procession, peculiar to mornings in Congress Park, moving along the asphalt past her; bright servant girls are pursuing runaway children; nurses are toting babies in their arms; a few ladies and gentlemen are strolling about, and two men are seated on a bench at an angle to herself talking carelessly together.

The band is playing loudly; she does not hear their conversation.

Suddenly the music ceases, and words smite her ears with vivid startle and effect.

"You've just come from Silveropolis, haven't you?" queries one.

"Yes, arrived at the Springs this morning. I came up to see Guernsey. I want a promise of an appropriation for the navigation of Battle Creek. It runs through my ranch, and I think if the government would build a few irrigating dams up at the head waters of it, it would improve my property. He's here, ain't he?"

"Oh, yes; the old man's up here as big as life, and would you swallow it—" here the speaker chuckles to himself— "he's going it like sin, and has got a *gal*!"

"War-whoops! Got a gal? The old straightlace, you don't mean it!"

"Yes, siree; he's got his brand on one, 'G. G.,' Guernsey's Gal! And if she ain't a screamer, Indians ain't horse thieves!"

"He's got a *girl*!" falters Evie with a sudden start; and rising hastily walks past these gentlemen, who are strangers to her, giving them a rather haughty glance, as if to rebuke their careless tongues; at which the one who has made the remark gets very red in the face.

As she wanders out of the park her heart grows bitter and she mutters: "Got a *gal*! The frank-faced hypocrite!"

For a moment she is half stunned, then suddenly into her mind comes a curious emotion, half curiosity, perchance half anger, with a tinge—though she will not admit it—of what every woman has, jealousy. Not that she loves Doc. Guernsey, oh, no! But still she has at least thought herself first in his attentions at this watering-place.

"Who is she?" she thinks. "Who *is* she?" Then laughs, a nasty sneer in her tone: "He's got his brand on her; I should know her." And clenching her little hand she mutters: "What a hypocrite he is, Mr. Sly-boots Guernsey!"

And Evelyn's manner when she meets the senator from the West is very cool and haughty; but though she throws out very deft and guarded hints to Flora and one or two other ladies whose acquaintance she has made, she gets no satisfaction on this point. She is, of course, compelled to approach the subject with the most round-about diplomacy, and either no one understands her, or no one will rise to her gossipy innuendoes and suggestions.

But this hurries a certain arrangement that she has already in her mind, for the very day after this Mrs. Montessor informs Mr. Guernsey that she and Miss Atherton purpose taking a little cottage in pretty Circular street that skirts the upper edge of Congress Park.

"We think of setting up Spinster's Hall," says Evie. "At least, Flora does. I presume *I* should call it the Widow's Retreat," she adds, mayhap a little coyly.

"By George! if you don't look out the boys will come round and make it Matrimonial Villa," suggests the Senator jovially. Then he says, a little hesitation in his voice: "I suppose I—I can come round?"

"Yes, as one of the boys!" cries Flora Atherton, impulsively, at which the Western magnate grows red about the face, and Evie turns away biting her lip with rage at herself, because she is blushing also.

But it is a most effective blush. It is a blush that makes the Honorable Doc. Guernsey toss that night uneasily on his pillow; he who has defied the dart of the Saratoga mosquito.

This arrangement would have doubtless been very

shortly made, were it not for an incident that takes place the next day. They have an engagement to go driving in the afternoon to the lake, and the Senator has suggested a little dinner afterwards at Riley's at Lake Lonely.

The party consists of Flora, young Slammer, Evie, and the Senator, who is in a very contented, easy-going state of mind, as Mrs. Montessor's austerity to him has relaxed, for Evelyn finding no confirmation of the *on dit* she has heard in regard to "Doc. Guernsey's gal," and never, in her various wanderings at the hotels or parks or any place of resort in Saratoga, having encountered this young lady, has made up her mind that the conversation she heard in Congress Park was merely the idle babble of some Western man who wished to impress the new comer from his section with his knowledge of things scandalous in Saratoga.

She is, therefore, at her best, for her mind is bright and her face smiling, as she holds out a little gloved hand, and permits the gallant from Populoso to assist her into the carriage, which he does with a hearty good will, a strong hand, and a cheery "Step up Sissy."

"Now we are fixed," he says, lightly; then cries: "Hi, driver!" to the colored boy, who acts as Jehu, "Trot 'em along!"

And away they go in the stream of carriages upon that most popular of drives, the one that leads to the lake. From this they make a detour, for they wish the jaunt to be a long one, and going by Vichy Spring pause to enjoy its mineral waters as they pour fresh and foaming into their glasses.

An hour afterward they are at Riley's, famous among all who have ever had the joy of partaking of its hospitality, for its dinners though simple are unique and wondrous in their freshness and in their flavor.

It is one of these repasts that they sit waiting for, enjoying the soft sunset that is coming down through the trees, making deep shadows on the bosom of the water below them, the leaves just trembling in a slight summer zephyr, the sun just becoming bearable, for the day has been a sultry one in Satatoga.

"It's as pretty a picture as the start for the Suburban," remarks young Slammer, contemplatively.

"Prettier, sir," replies the Senator, "than any race course! Out in my country we take off our hats to the horse, who is our friend and companion, but we bow down to the ladies, who are our angels and blessings."

As he speaks, he is looking at Evie, who is standing outlined by the sunset behind her, and calling vivaciously, "Catch the big ones!" to Mr. Riley, who is pulling out of his own fish-pond four remarkably fine bass, which in five minutes will be cooking in the frying-pan, and one of them, in fifteen more, will be being dissected by the pearly teeth of the lady, who is encouraging his onslaught on the finny tribe.

"Gracious! Are they not beauties?" she says, admiringly, as Riley returns, bearing his captives. "That one is for me."

But if Evie is admiring the fish the Senator is admiring her, with much better taste, though both are the finest of their kind.

For the lady is as lovely as has been seen in Saratoga since the days the Indians left it. In all its years, when the belles of the South "before de wa'" came to drink its sparkling waters and throng its ballrooms; in its days of glory, when its race-track was crowded by the East and West and North and South, who came to lay their money on their pet thoroughbreds, State against State; when Tom Bowling, of Kentucky raced against Harry Bassett, of New Jersey; in the brilliant society of the "United States," before Newport became first in social

prestige, never has any more beautiful woman stood by the side of exquisite Lake Lonely and added to the loveliness of the scene.

Yet simplicity is her great ornament, for Evie is in pure, fairy white, save a few roses in her bosom, which dash a little color on a picture that would be cold were it not for the blush on her cheeks, the vivacity in her eyes, and the cherry beauties of her lips, that, as Mr. Guernsey remarks, "are always expressing something."

Some women have lips that speak though their tongues do not move.

From her fishing she comes running gracefully up to the Solon and gives him a charming *moue* that makes his heart beat, then pouts: "Mr. Riley says he isn't going to give me the biggest bass. He insists my mouth isn't large enough for it."

"The heartless reprobate!" chuckles the Senator. "If he gives me the biggest I shall consider Riley's remarks personal."

"And resent them upon the fish," laughs Mr. Slammer.

But Guernsey doesn't hear the turfman's wit for Evelyn has suddenly cried: "Oh, gracious! I've lost my bracelet, fishing!"

So the two stroll down to the pond to find it, leaving Flora and her admirer behind them. The fish pool is in a little hollow near the lake. To it Guernsey and Evelyn descend by a short path. The sun is just going down, the trees shade the place and in the uncertain light the search for the missing trinket takes some little time.

Perchance delay is not altogether unpleasant to the statesman, whose eyes seem to seek his fair companion more than they do for her bracelet; as she, in graceful attitude, gropes eagerly for the ornament about the edges of the pool.

At last he cries in triumph: "I've spotted it!" and holds up the bauble, which is a plain gold affair bearing one or two bangles upon it, very simple yet very pretty. "As a reward I'll replace it!"

"With pleasure," replies the lady most unaffectedly and extends to him a white arm, dimpled wrist and delicate patrician hand.

She has taken off her gloves to aid her search and Doc. Guernsey's fingers seem to be paralyzed thumbs as they encounter her satin skin. The catch is a simple one but he doesn't seem to be able to snap it on. The thrill that runs up his fingers as he touches the pretty wrist seems to make him awkward, and the Western Senator bungles at this entrancing job as many a man has done before and as many a man will do hereafter.

"You don't seem to understand the affair," remarks Evie, laughing lightly.

In truth he does not, for his thoughts are not on the bracelet, but upon the exquisite wrist and magnificent arm he holds in his hands.

A minute after it is done!

"Thank you," she replies, and turns toward the house; but he still keeps her hand as if loath to let it go.

Suddenly a start and thrill go through Evelyn, for as her back is turned to him she thinks she feels her fair wrist grazed by a mustache. She doesn't turn her face to his; she doesn't wish him to see how red it is. There is a swish of white skirts and a glimpse of dazzling ankles as she flies up the steep path and is gone.

And Guernsey, striding after her, remarks to himself in pathetic *sotto voce*: "She fled from the hand of fellowship with the cry of a startled colt."

On the veranda Evelyn turns to him again and laughs: "You didn't beat me up the hill, mountain man as you are,"

"No," replies the Solon prophetically, "but I'll catch you some day, *sure!*"

A minute after, dinner is announced, and the quartette go in to a meal that they never forget; for when one has dined at Riley's, it is a thing that lingers in the remembrance. Amid the gorgeousness of New York dinner-parties, among the rich wines of club banquets, surrounded by the glories at a lunch at the Waldorf, or a *petit souper* at Delmonico's, memories of Riley's will come back to one who has partaken at his simple board.

The table is decked with the whitest of tablecloths and napkins, the china white also, but on it is a repast that makes an epicure's palate throb and a gourmand's teeth do deadly work. Saratoga Lake bass, just out of the water, cooked to the quarter of a turn; fresh corn plucked within the hour, succulent, juicy, and soft enough to be babies' food, as Guernsey suggests; chickens as tender as young partridges, and fritters the recollection of which never leaves man nor woman when they have eaten them *once!* This is all; but washed down by cool and dry champagne in quantities to suit, and backed up by coffee, and for the gentlemen cigars, it makes both Mr. Slammer and the statesman from the West feel in the Seventh Heaven, after they have taken a pony of cognac of the right brand and the right year.

How man's heart warms after dinner, and woman's heart also. They all drive home very happy from this dinner at Riley's, Mr. Slammer because Flora has whispered to him quite blushing that he can take her every day to the races; the Senator because he still remembers with guilty throbs that his lips have kissed the widow's fair and dazzling wrist. Perchance, also, in the moonlight she permits him to hold for one moment her patrician fingers cased within her dainty gloves, very modestly, very tremblingly,

for the Senator's grip is of iron, and it is only by Spartan resolution that Evie refrains from opening her little mouth and uttering a plaintive squeal as he assists her out of the carriage.

But the effect of this is equally great upon the Solon, who, after they have arrived at the Windsor and the ladies have retired from his gaze, walks down to Congress Park and sinking upon a bench, mutters: "By the Lord! I wish I could keep from thinking poetry about her! Is it that or the mosquitoes that keep me awake at nights? Everything is going so free and easy here that it would be a perfect paradise if I could only sleep."

Then he retires to his senatorial couch, to awaken the next morning to astonishment, dismay, and perturbation of spirit, and to discover that all is not going free and easy at Saratoga.

The disaster that comes upon Mr. Guernsey in the morning is brought about by a revelation that comes to Evie this night in a few scraps of conversation which float up to her from the veranda below.

Her room is on the second floor, with windows opening on the great portico that shades this side of the hotel, the roof of which is so high that it incloses the second and third stories, making them part of the balcony itself. The night is quiet, for the devilish Italian boy who sings "My Marguerite" incessantly at the hotel opposite, to the vile jingling of Italian stringed instruments, has eaten too much watermelon, and the colic gives respite from his torment.

Two gentlemen are conversing on the portico immediately below her window which, the night being warm, is open to its full extent. One of them is Mr. Mart Crossbrand, the Westerner, whose conversation had interested Evelyn at Koster & Bial's.

As she lies languidly on a couch near the window

seeking for air, for this has been one of Saratoga's sultry days, the familiarity of the voice first catches her attention; then, the conversation comes to her with startling distinctness and these are the words she hears:

"Have you spoken to the Senator yet, Bullem?"

"About the money I was robbed of the night of his election? You bet—that's one of the things brought me to Saratoga—that and the Post Office!"

"Did you get any satisfaction?"

"No, curse him! he told me he knew nothing about it; furthermore that if anybody had paid any money to obtain his election it was without his knowledge or consent—gave me the Bronco kick and stiff-buck at one and the same time. Said I must have *dreamed* of having had the eighteen hundred dollars, let alone losing 'em! No friend of his would have dared to offer a bribe in his name."

"Well, I think he told the truth, Bob."

"What! Didn't know that money was paid out to make him an Honorable and a United States Senator? Give that to the coyotes. But I'll be even with him," goes on the man shortly. "Wait till I get back to Silveropolis; I'll tell 'em of the moralist's fall from grace!"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, you know what I mean. Hasn't he got a widow on the string here? Didn't you see him flip the beaut out of the carriage ten minutes ago? That's the reason he shipped his sister off to Europe. He's going to make a long spree of it up here."

"Perhaps he's only got a fatherly interest in her," laughs Mr. Crossbrand.

"Fatherly interest? Hell and Greasers! Did you ever see a senator have a *fatherly* interest in anything? You don't know 'em at Washington as I do.

I tell you 'Doc. Guernsey's gal' 'll make head-lines for the *Silveropolis Buzzard*. Let's go into the bar and take a drink to 'Guernsey's Gal.'"

Then the other's words come to her and burn into Evie's brain: "I'll liquor, of course, but it's a pity," remarks Crossbrand, with almost a sigh, "that a man who was as upright as a telegraph pole should be dragged in the mud by a Jezebel siren."

Now, a good deal of this conversation is true, for, curiously enough, Doc. Guernsey has gone through as little of the moral degeneration often attendant upon an election to the United States Senate as is compatible with success. For few men in the present status of politics in the United States can hope to aspire to the senatorial chamber without a bargain of some kind. Out West, quite often dollars pure and simple do the business, in Eastern and more strait-laced communities, generally promises of office; but the taint of a political trade is in it just the same and a man after passing through such an election, triumphant politically as he may be, bowed down to as he must be by his constituents, a power in the nation as he is, must take his seat in the senatorial chair with his high ideals of political morality somewhat impeached, and generally in his heart the thought: "This office is *mine*! I bought it! It is for *my* use, it is for *my* good, not that of the people of the United States!"

His one thought is generally how he shall get it again, and he shapes his course with that aim in view, and quite often, God be praised, misses his mark! For the old dyed-in-the-wool two-term senator is very apt to imagine there is nothing so high upon this earth as "senatorial courtesy," that the press should not criticise, that the public should not complain, that what is done in the senate is of the senate, and every member should stand by for the honor of the

other. It is not "God save the nation," but "God save us."

But Evie does not think of the dragging in the mud of the idol of Silveropolis. What concerns her is the dragging in the mud of her own dainty self. She had passed this lightly by in her plan of the campaign which was to win the heart of a magnate of the Senate and sell his vote for her own empty but capacious pocket.

Her lips tremble as she bursts into bitter laughter and jeers herself, muttering: "Doc. Guernsey's *gal*! I have been seeking for her all over Saratoga, and now—ha! ha! ha!—I've found her. *I am Doc. Guernsey's GAL*. I knew—of course I knew—that would be the result," she murmurs, her face pale, her eyes staring, "that the moment a man was called *my* senator I should be styled *his* mistress! God help me, I did think it! but I didn't think it would be so bitter, so degrading."

Then she bursts out, mocking herself again: "Doc. Guernsey's *GAL*! Doc. Guernsey's *GAL*!" And her fair form writhes as she stings herself with the vile epithet. But, forcing herself to calmness, she thinks: "What do I care about rumor so long as I am innocent? Does not everybody in the Bohemia that I live in get the credit of being as light and loose in their morals as they are in their purses?"

But the epithet will not down in her mind. She laughs a ghastly laugh: "I, who was to have been his Cleopatra, am now called his *GAL*!"

But with this comes sudden shock and startling idea. "I shall stoop," she shudders, "without conquering. In this place, with its myriads of women who will soon be here for the races, some good, some indifferent—most of them bad—I shall be regarded as one of the common herd of *summer* wives. I shall be no higher in

his eyes than any of the half dozen ladies who are now casting their glances on him, seeking his power, his wealth, and his good graces. I shall be rolled in the mud of his chariot, but shall not flaunt the flag of victory. No, I will ride in the chariot with him; that or nothing! I may be his guiding star, but his slave, never! I will yet be his Cleopatra, even to his undoing, for I have heard him talk again to-day of his *sainted* father! He said his sister was traveling in Europe in luxury—where is my sister? But to do this, I must come to him from a *higher* plane, not from a lower one; one where there are no politicians to degrade me with their tongues, nor constituents from the West to tell of the man ‘as upright as a telegraph pole’ being destroyed by a ‘Jezebel siren.’ I’ll stay here no more! Then if he follows me, I shall know that some day he will be truly MY Senator, not I his GAL!”

The next morning the Honorable Doc. Guernsey rises a little late perchance, for he has not slept well in the early hours of the night, but withal, is now very debonair and fresh looking, with a dewy posy in his buttonhole.

To the waiter at their cosy little table for three, in the dining room, the statesman remarks: “I see the ladies have already breakfasted?”

“Yes, sir,” answers the attendant, made affable and talkative by a crisp, new dollar greenback. “They both partook very early this morning.”

This news does not destroy Mr. Guernsey’s appetite, and, after a leisurely, comfortable and pleasant meal, he strolls out to the office, and says to the clerk: “The ladies have gone out, I imagine?”

“Yes, sir,” replies the gentleman in the office; “they have left the hotel.”

“Oho!” thinks the Senator, as he strides out of the portals. “Gone over to their new cottage, I reckon.

Curious they didn't ask me to look after their trunks!"

With this he steps down to the little cottage on Circular street, but, to his astonishment, its door is not open, and the sign, "To rent," is still upon it.

"That's curious," he thinks. "I'll ask at the agent's;" and is soon at the office of the real estate man, who, to his surprise, tells him that Mrs. Montessor has not taken the cottage.

"In fact, I received a note from her this morning," remarks the gentleman, "telling me that she had given up the idea, and was leaving Saratoga."

"Leaving Saratoga!" gasps his auditor. "Young man, you must be loony!" and strides out of the office, making very quick work of it up the hill to the Windsor, frequently wiping the perspiration from his forehead in a dazed manner as he climbs the steep grade. He is out of breath when he arrives at the hotel and strides into the office.

"You said the ladies—by that you meant Mrs. Montessor and Miss Atherton—left the hotel. Where did they go?" he asks, eagerly—anxiously.

"To New York, I believe, sir, by the morning train!"

"Gee whizz!" And the Senator staggers out to the front piazza and sits down astounded, disturbed, and dismayed. The sun seems to have gone out of the heavens to him. A few minutes after he comes back and says, pleadingly: "Are there any—any letters for me?"

"No, sir—not this morning," remarks the clerk.

Then the sky is very black to the Honorable Mr. Guernsey this bright summer day. However, ten minutes afterward he goes into the office again and whispers, falteringly: "Any—any telegrams?"

"Not yet, sir!"

Then he questions: "Mrs. Montessor and Miss Atherton left hurriedly?"

"Yes, sir; I think it must have been some sudden news from New York. They came down and paid their bill; their trunks were already packed, and they had only time to catch the morning train just after breakfast."

"Sudden news, telegraphic information of a lot of imported bonnets, gowns, and folderols from *Parie*, eh?" remarks Mr. Guernsey, attempting jocularly, and stepping out of the hotel, walks about the town, remarking: "Sudden news? They'll telegraph. Death in the family, perhaps—struck 'em silly."

But his face has such an expression upon it of sudden shock and agitated suspense that Mr. Bob Bullem remarks to his friend Crossbrand: "Did you see Guernsey's phiz? Look at it! By Yankee Doodle, they are going to contest his election *sure!*" and chuckles to himself as if demented.

As for poor Guernsey, he passes two unhappy days in which he thinks Saratoga is a gloomy hole, and the spring water is no good and makes him sick, until finally one morning, as he is sitting on the veranda of the hotel meditating about bolting from the "cussed place" the sun once more shines in the heavens to him, for he sees Flora Atherton standing on the portico of the Windsor looking as fresh and untraveled-stained as if she had never left Saratoga.

With one wave he throws away his half-smoked cigar and clasps her hand, murmuring: "This *is* fine! Back again, looking as fresh and natural as if you hadn't been away. I suppose you'll occupy your usual seats in the dining room? I have kept 'em for you, though you didn't deserve it—going away without even saying good-bye. But you expected to come up sooner?"

"Yes, *I* did."

"And Mrs.—Mrs. Montessor?" This is said eagerly, nervously.

"I left her in New York."

Then the sun goes out of the heaven again to Doc. Guernsey. "She—she didn't come up?" he stammers beneath his breath.

"No, she will not return. Evie has some fad in her head about another place," remarks Flora, savagely. "She wouldn't even come up to the races, and I had promised Mr. Slammer to let him bet for me on every one of them."

"She gave you no—no message?"

This is said in such husky plaintiveness that the actress laughs: "Here's something to raise your spirits," and places in his hand a little scented *billet-doux*.

As Flora trips away, Mr. Guernsey opens the following note:

NEW YORK, July 27.

DEAR MR. GUERNSEY:

Pardon my rudeness in not writing to you the morning I left Saratoga, or bidding you good-bye, but I was compelled by sudden news to depart at once for New York.

The doctors here recommend sea air for me. I think of taking a cottage at Narragansett Pier for the rest of the season. Should you chance to come that way, run in and say "How do you do?" to

Your sincere friend,

EVELYN MONTRESSOR.

He reads this epistle twice, then meditatively utters these curious words: "When temptation has run away from you, you'd better not run after it, Doc Guernsey!"

But a moment after this gentleman from the West falters: "Great Scott, the poor thing's sick! She needs sea air," next says resolutely: "That's what's been the matter with me up here. I'm a mountain man. I need sea air also—*gusts of it!*"

CHAPTER XI.

WANTED A DUENNA!

Now all this has come about in this way: Evelyn had suddenly packed her trunks and persuaded Miss Atherton to run down with her to New York, the actress imagining it was for a day's jaunt in the city, for Flora has forgotten, in the attractions of the horsey, free-handed, high-betting young Mr. Slammer, the fascinations of the penurious, empty-pocketed, artistic, Von Spitzer. Therefore it is to her dismay that the widow informs her that she is *not* going to return to the fascinations of Saratoga in its racing month.

"Not go back?" Flora has cried. "Not going to return? What will the Senator say and—Mr. Slammer?"

"You can make the Senator content with this note," laughs Mrs. Montessor, handing Flora her epistle, "and young Slammer very happy by reappearing yourself."

"Without *you*?"

"Certainly!"

"But the Senator—the *poor* Senator!"

"Nonsense!"

And Evie is hard-hearted as regards the poor Senator, also as regards her pretty chum, whose pouts, complaints, and even tears do not change Mrs. Montessor's line of action, now she has made up her mind to it.

Therefore Flora returns alone to Saratoga, and Mrs. Montessor astonishes Mr. Steinbergh by walking into his private office in Wall street one morning, and saying: "My dear boy, I want you to get me a duenna."

"A WHAT?"

"A duenna!"

"We don't deal in the article about here," says the financier, stifling a laugh.

"A duenna! Perhaps you would call it a chaperone. Some lady to guard me from a censorious world, now that I have lost the protection of a husband."

And she gives him a charming smile, frank glance, and dainty hand.

"It appears to me, laughs Steinbergh, "that Claude is the one who needs the protection, judging by the foolish books he makes upon the races. But you want a chaperone! Why?"

"I'll tell you," remarks Evelyn, and proceeds to give Mr. Steinbergh a succinct, vivid, yet humorous, relation of some things that have taken place in Saratoga; not laying bare her innermost mind to the financier, by any means, but still giving him enough of her emotions to show him that the epithet of "Doc Guernsey's gal" has not been pleasing to her.

"Pooh!" says the Wall street man. "You shouldn't mind that. The more prominent a gentleman, the more beautiful a lady, the more scandal about them. I myself," here he smiles slightly, "have oftentimes been maligned in the press, chiefly because they claim I'm a millionaire. They have been hating me so long that they wouldn't forgive me now, even if I grew *poor*. Perchance they wouldn't be kind to thee, even if thou lost thy beauty. You don't want to try the experiment, though, do you?"

"Not *this* year," laughs the widow. Then she says, coming to her point again: "Can't you, among all the people who have applied to you for financial points, for hints upon stocks, in the great following, not of a man who is rich, but the greater following of a man who can make others rich, think of some lady who has just the tip of her finger in the doorway of society—some one I

can push in, grab hold of and go in with her? You do everything, you are omnipotent!"

"Not socially," remarks the financier very grimly; for his name has just been slated for a vacant place in the list of Patriarchs, and it is a greater bitterness to him than if he had been defeated in a stock speculation. Perhaps this very feeling makes him pity the fair would-be wanderer from Bohemia, and he says: "I'll see. Where are you stopping? I'll call upon you in the next day or two."

"At the Waldorf," says the lady.

"What?"

"AT THE WALDORF!"

And she goes away, leaving him so impressed by this remark that he mutters to himself, "She's a great woman!" Then meditates, perchance a little sadly: "She'll soon be wanting me to be speculating in stocks for her again."

The next day Mr. Steinbergh calls at this far-famed hotel, and, taking Evie to a performance at the Madison Square Roof Garden, and thereafter to supper at Delmonico's, tells her that he has arranged the matter for her.

Señora de Oriva, of Cuba, a lady of reduced fortune, her estates having suffered greatly by the political uncertainties of the island, is anxious to add to her income. "This lady," he remarks, "lives in Washington during the winter. She is well known at the Spanish Embassy, and consequently has a certain *entrée*, though undoubtedly a limited one, to society there. She is a very pleasant and charming woman and not over beautiful," he continues, with a grimace. "But I think she may be of some assistance to you. Her appearance indicates a decided adherence to the *convenances* of society and a moral rectitude that is impressive. She has a son who is a romantic creature

but he is away and doesn't count. You think of going to Narragansett?"

"Yes," replies the lady, "my purse does not permit Newport."

"In Newport I don't think Señora de Oriva would be of much use to you, but at Narragansett she may be of more benefit. I shall probably see you there," adds Mr. Steinbergh as he says adieu. "I have now a new white steam yacht called the *Goldfinch*."

"Ah, come—I shall make up a yachting party for you," remarks Mrs. Montessor; then she says impulsively: "How can I ever thank you?"

Perchance his glance answers her, but she will not understand, and says lightly, "*Au revoir*," and goes up in the elevator of the Waldorf from his Teutonic eyes, that grow almost pathetic as they look after her.

So it comes to pass that in a pretty little cottage at Narragansett Pier, a few days after this, Mrs. Montessor is sitting on the lawn talking to Mr. Steinbergh, who has this day run over in his yacht, the *Goldfinch*, from Newport. Señora de Oriva is doing her knitting on the porch in a placid way; the air is fresh with sea breeze, the sun is bright overhead, and their conversation is light, happy, debonair, perchance even flirtatious. To them comes a crunching step on the gravel walk, and Evelyn, looking up, sees Doc Guernsey gazing at the financier with the look of a grizzly bear.

She knows she has him! Oh, the joy, the triumph!

"What, here at last?" cries Evie with such unaffected delight that Bruin grows as good-natured as if he were eating honey and as smooth as if his claws were sheathed in velvet.

"Yes, I had to come down to Newport to see Chip-pie on political business. He's my senior senator, you know. But Newport was too rich for my blood, so I

thought I'd run over here and see if you were in the land of the living."

"I have done just the same thing in my steam yacht," remarks Mr. Steinbergh as Evie is shaking hands with the statesman from the West.

"This is delightful," cries the widow. "I shall give you two lunch in about five minutes if Señora de Oriva doesn't object. You know she's my chaperone here," she says, following Mr. Guernsey's relieved glance at the duenna, a glance that grows into a spasm of astonishment; for the appearance of the Spanish lady is such as would give any man dismay, for no greater dragon of virtue in appearance has ever been exhibited in Spanish plays. She has the eyes of a hawk, only larger and more piercing; her nose is like unto the beak of an eagle, though somewhat sharper; her figure is gaunt beyond gauntness, and displays in low-necked dress in the afternoon manner of the Spaniard. Besides this, she has a mustache of such long, dark, strong hair that for one moment Guernsey has thought she is a man in disguise. Still with all this her manners are those of a lady who has been born almost in the purple; her voice, to the astonishment of those who look upon her and have not heard it, is sweet and melodious.

A minute after the Senator is presented and received with great *empressement* by the Castilian dragon; for senators are very great men in Washington, and she has lived there long enough to know their potency and status.

"*El nuevo senador* from Populoso. The honor is mine," she murmurs, as she courtesies to Guernsey's affable bow.

A minute later Evelyn goes in with her to assist the preparation of her hospitable board, leaving the two gentlemen together.

"What do you think of her?" says Steinbergh smiling.

"Who, Mrs. Montessoro? She's a rosebud."

"I referred to her chaperon," returns the financier dryly.

"Great Scott!" exclaims Guernsey, "she's the only woman I would forgive for shaving!" at which they both burst out laughing, and would be very friendly did they not both so much admire Mrs. Montessoro.

A moment after Señora de Oriva requests the gentleman to "deign to accept lunch," which they both do with an alertness born of a Narragansett appetite that comes from sea air.

They enter to find Evie seated at the head of a pretty little table adorned by flowers and, with one at her right hand and the other at her left and virtue personified by the Spanish dragon at the foot, make a delightful meal of it.

"You found Newport too rich for your blood, Senator?" remarks Steinbergh, a quizzical smile on his astute face.

"Yes, Chippie tried to do the right thing for me socially over there, but I felt as if I were in a foreign land," replies the Solon. Then he adds somewhat sadly: "International marriages and international railroad stocks have sapped the patriotism in Newport women and New York stockbrokers."

"Pooh! we needn't be afraid of European stock quotations if Congress will only give us a stable currency based upon the gold dollar of the world," answers the financier lightly.

At this the silver man stabs fork into his lobster, glares at the gold bug, and mutters: "That isn't patriotic. Silver is *our* metal! We've got more of it out West than any country on earth."

"Yes, we've got too much of it in Washington," replies the Wall street man. "Several hundred millions are now stored in the treasury vaults and nobody wants

it. Out West you don't *want* it. You only want to sell it *higher* than the market."

"Good Heavens!" pathetically murmurs Mrs. Montessor, who is staring at the two animated gentlemen. "Can't you find a subject upon which both the silver man and the gold bug can agree?"

"I think we can," laughs Mr. Steinbergh gazing at her.

At which Guernsey remarks: "I am with you!"

And they do well to agree on her, for she is brighter than gold and fairer than silver, though she is generally an imported article, her gown being of the finest Lyons silk, though very light and floating, her laces coming from the looms of Valenciennes. The only thing she has about her which is American is her beauty, and even that has at times French touches in it, the results of her baby life in Paris and the blood of her mother, the New Orleans creole, which give to her vivacity, lightness and an idealized *chic*, though underneath her airs, graces, and feminine deliciousness, is a resolute spirit and a mind with a good deal of feminine hit-or-miss logic in it.

Even now, she is looking at these two gentlemen, one the financier, who controls the Gelatine Trust, and the other the Senator, who has the voting power upon the duties to be placed on that article, and is calculating how to make the one useful to her in conjunction with the other.

But no such thought is on her face; it has only witchery, fascination, subtle *abandon*, and that God-given gift to man or woman, ineffable charm of manner.

So the lunch goes off quite pleasantly, Evelyn permitting the gentlemen to talk and noting rather shrewdly the position they bear to each other. From Mr. Steinbergh's actions she judges that he wishes to make the Senator his friend. He avoids all discussion

of points either political or financial upon which they disagree and very diplomatically discusses with the politician subjects upon which they have views in common.

She is right in this, for Steinbergh ever since he has met the Western gentleman has determined to gain the confidence and, if possible, the friendship of the Honorable James B. Guernsey, Senator from Populoso, whose vote will be a very important factor in deciding the schedule of duties upon imported gelatine—exceedingly important because he is a silver man and will perhaps have influence among the silver senators. For Steinbergh has discovered that Guernsey is a man of what is called out West “backbone” and that he has ideas in his cerebrum to stiffen his spinal marrow.

Even at the lunch table, during light conversation, the capitalist becomes certain that his *vis-à-vis* is not a man to be purchased with money or tips on stocks. Any attempt of that kind he would surely and sternly resent, though he is very open to friendship and good-fellowship.

“All the better for me,” cogitates the financier, “*if I get him!*—all the stronger his vote, all the more potent his influence.”

He also discovers that Guernsey is very susceptible to the glances of the fair lady at the head of the table, and cogitates grimly: “How beautifully she plays her game to catch this Western fish.”

Suddenly there flies into his mind: “What does she mean to do with this fish after she has landed it?”

Altogether, as he sips his coffee after the meal, Mr. Steinbergh's thoughts are not pleasant. It is never agreeable to any man to find another has stepped into his place with a pretty woman. But Steinbergh is not only a man of sentiment but a man of affairs, and business in him dominates all else. It is this that has given him his great success.

"Since Mrs. Montessor has made up her mind to make me play second violin to the senator," he cogitates, "I may at least use her influence."

Acting upon this idea, for the latter half of the meal he poses simply as the well-wishing friend of their hostess. During the first courses, he had been a competitor with Guernsey for the lady's smiles; if she gave the Western man a mocking look, an enchanting glance, he had struggled to obtain one for himself. Now he drops out of the race and permits the last entry to make the running, devoting himself to Señora de Oriva and her mustache; but it is with a sigh—philosopher as he is—that he turns away from the exquisite face and graceful figure and thinks, "Is the pioneer Solon to get what I long for?"

This is an opportunity the Castilian duenna has been waiting for. She takes immediate advantage of it, and says: "Señor Steinbergh, you remember my boy?"

"Yes," answers the financier, abstractedly, as he catches in Evie's light chatter: "You forgive me for running away from you at Saratoga, don't you, Mr Guernsey?"

"You remember him! It is well!" continues the Señora, in intense Spanish tone. "You remember my noble-hearted Gonzalo. The poor patriotic boy has gone back to Cuba. I am in an agony. He has learned to talk, with an open tongue, politics in America; he cannot remember that the mouth should be closed and the tongue should be cut off in Cuba. I tremble when I think of him. I have written, imploring him to come back. He is so impetuous, the Government will kill him for his brave words. Could you not, when he returns, kind Señor—who does everybody good, even yourself—could you not get him an honorable position in one of your gelatine refineries? He knows all about boiling the gelatine."

"When he gets back I'll see about it," murmurs Mr. Steinbergh absent-mindedly, and rising from the table, adds: "If you'll excuse me I'll go out and smoke a cigar."

For just now Guernsey's voice has come to him in stentorian western whisper: "You'll have to be mighty kind to me down here, because you treated me so sharp, snappy, and coltish up at the Springs."

This speech, as the Wall Street man sits down to smoke, is not made pleasant even by the flavor of a magnificent cigar. But the philosophy in him overcomes the sentiment: as he smokes he meditates. He knows the Gelatine Trust is going to have the fight of its existence in the United States Senate. The House is safe, but the Senate! There will come the contest.

"I don't believe I can influence him a little bit and this man's vote and assistance would nearly make it certain for us. Money won't buy him, social success, even if I could arrange it, he would scorn. What other bribe have I to offer him?"

As he meditates he chances to glance through the open window into the dining-room and there sees an expression on Doc Guernsey's face that makes him think with startling intuition: "By Heavens, he loves her! She can do it! Evie has the influence that I, Steinbergh, cannot obtain. She must make *his* vote *her* vote and then—I will buy *her* vote!"

A moment later the two come out of the dining-room, the New Yorker offers the Westerner one of his cigars, and as they smoke the gentlemen grow very friendly, for Steinbergh's guarded manner to Evelyn has cast out jealousy from the statesman's strong but simple mind.

"You can't hear the murmur of the sea on your veranda," remarks Guernsey.

"And yet we are very near the water," replies Evie;

"but the ocean is as quiet as a lamb. What a day it would be for a sail!"

"Would you like one?" queries Steinbergh suddenly. "We always keep steam up off the pier. What do you say to a couple hours' run to Block Island?"

"Lovely!" cries Evelyn. "You'll come, of course, Mr. Guernsey?"

"Of—of course," falters the Senator, souvenirs of some extraordinary feelings that had come to him as he had journeyed across the open bay on the steamer from Newport, tending to make him cautious in the matter. Ten minutes later they are all on board the *Goldfinch*, which floats on the water like a great white swan.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOP AT THE NARRAGANSETT CASINO.

ON her deck the gentlemen contrive to enjoy themselves very pleasantly; at least Guernsey does, for Evie this day is a mixture of vivacious artlessness and girlish frankness, as she favors her Western admirer with one or two of those *petites confidences* that are so dear to the masculine heart.

Twice she says: "You're perfectly awful!" and once she tells him he must help her down the companion-ladder, his arm is so strong, and his sailor feet so firm. These both are palpable fibs, for Guernsey is behaving himself very well, and his sea-legs are the most erratic on the ship, but they are said in *tête-à-tête* whispers and bring joy into his soul—which is growing ardent and romantic.

As for Steinbergh, he forces himself to attentions to the Spanish duenna, whose appearance not only compels virtue, but offers a destroys vice. For as Mr. Guernsey cogitates: "She would discourage even a cowboy on a spree."

Consequently La Oriva's beauty does not tempt the gentleman from Wall Street so greatly that he makes the yachting jaunt a long one. Besides, the *Goldfinch* is very fast and soon takes them to Block Island, where the ocean swell, coming all the way from Spain, causes the Western landsman suddenly to turn pale and ejaculate: "Great Scotty!" and a minute after falter: "Hadn't we better get back in time for—for dinner?" Therefore the run back is made rapidly.

By the time they are off the Casino landing-place,

Guernsey has recovered sufficiently to offer a very gallant arm to his charmer, as she trips down the gangway to the steam-launch; the fair one emitting one or two pathetic little shudders as the vessel lurches, and clutching very tightly with fairy hands the stalwart arm of the gentleman from the West—attentions that send thrills through his strong frame, and make him think yachting is a delightful pastime.

Mr. Steinbergh does not accompany them to the shore; he waves them adieu from his deck, remarking: "I am compelled to return immediately to Newport."

He doesn't care to look on this business any more, though it is to his financial interest. And once or twice as his vessel glides through the water, making for the "City by the Sea," he utters a suppressed anathema, even though he knows that he has probably laid the foundation for a great business stroke. But business does not always still the beating of the heart, and the chink of gold is not always the happiest sound upon this earth, when to gain it the financier is compelled to turn his eyes from beauty and the hope of making it his own.

As for Mr. Guernsey no such unpleasant feelings dominate his manly bosom. His mien becomes more confident as they near the shore. The thought that he is approaching *terra firma* makes him more audacious. He would fairly lift the sweet widow from the steam launch did he not suddenly recollect that politeness might require a similar gallantry to her duenna. Therefore, he simply presents his hand and assists both ladies from the boat.

Then they stroll along Ocean Road, taking a roundabout way to the little cottage on Central Street. It is a pleasant walk, made gay with pretty equipages and dashing turnouts; a four-in-hand drives past them from the Country Club, with tooting horn and prancing steeds; victorias and pony phaetons come flying in

review, and there are bikes and bikemen and bikesses innumerable. The place is bright with pretty women in fairy toilettes and gallant men who are looking after them, for "The Pier" is the one watering-place supremely blest by masculine humanity during its season. Newport is often short of beaux, but Narragansett always has enough. Men like its free-and-easy, go-as-you-please, do-what-you-choose life, and its sea bathing is the finest on the coast, and its girls are sample beauties from the four points of the compass.

But though they pause to gaze, they are soon at the cottage on Central Street. Here Mr. Guernsey takes his farewell, remarking:

"I have succeeded in obtaining a very small room at the Gladstone!"

"You are not going to remain long?" whispers the lady, inquiry—perchance entreaty in her eyes.

"Well, that's a thing to be determined hereafter."

"In that case you had better make the most of your time," laughs Mrs. Montessor. "You go to the Casino this evening, I presume? There will be music by two bands, moon and electric lights, a hop in the ballroom and—*me!*"

"I'm there!" remarks the Senator suddenly. Then he mutters, for somehow he is growing bold: "I'll come up and take you down."

"You—you don't mind Señora de Oriva accompanying us?" murmurs Evelyn, prodding with parasol a little boot that peeps from under white laces.

"With all the pleasure in the world. I dote on the Señora," remarks Guernsey enthusiastically, as he strides down the gravel walk; but his face does not show the eagerness his words suggest.

About nine o'clock the gentleman presents himself at the villa. Evie, cloaked and hooded, is awaiting

him; likewise the Señora, who has just received a letter from her son, who is *en route* for New York.

"My noble, truant boy, *muchachito mio!* when you see him you'll love him, Señor Guernsey," she murmurs, and puts her gaunt bare arm upon the Senator's broadcloth sleeve.

"Yes, he must be a hummer," says the Western man, "judging by his mother."

"*Gracias Señor Senador!* You do me too much honor," murmurs the dragon courtesying to the earth; a moment after she adds in kindly tones, "I shall ask you to look after Señora Montessor this evening, as I do not dance. I know I can trust a high official."

"Of that I must take my chances," laughs Evie, running down the path before them.

A minute after, however, she places, very confidently, a tiny, well-gloved hand upon Guernsey's arm, and they walk down, under green trees, and past flowering hedges to the center of the town. Then going in by the side entrance they stand in the Casino, which is now a blaze of electric lights; upon its large porticos, pavilion and tower, are fair women and their cavaliers, who are listening to the music of the Hungarian band.

"You'll come in to the hop?" remarks Evie suddenly.

"Yes, I suppose I may as well see the sights," and he leads her and her chaperone to the ladies' dressing room.

From this, having thrown off her wraps, Evie emerges in a gown that startles and allures him, for it is the first time he has seen her in full evening dress. The toilettes she had worn at Saratoga, even at hotel hops, had been demi-ones, Evie not having cared to enter greatly into the general social life of the place. Here, having made up her mind to get into society, and having, through Señora de Oriva, made the acquaintance of three or four Washington gentlemen, one or

two of whom are connected with foreign embassies, and several ladies with whom her chaperone had speaking acquaintance at Washington, Mrs. Montessor has determined, having got the tip of her finger in, to insinuate her fair hand and make a big fight to pull herself bodily into the social swim which she fondly hopes will take her as far as possible away from her deserted Bohemia.

Actuated by this idea, she has already made fearful inroads into her campaign money, as she calls it, for toilettes that are to delight mankind, especially this gentleman, who gazes at her, his eyes growing misty with admiration. Dreamy blue is her color this evening. She is a mass of cloudy effects, sunshiny—rainbowy; from which gleam forth arms white as snow, and neck, shoulders and bust dazzling as Parian marble beneath the brilliant lights that illumine their graceful curves. Curiously enough she wears no jewelry save the little bracelet the Senator had clasped upon her arm in Saratoga, when she thought she felt his mustache graze her wrist.

A minute later they are in the ballroom, where they make the Señora comfortable, seated beside a lady to whom she babbles of her noble-hearted boy, Gonzalo. But Guernsey does not enjoy the hop, for Evie accepts invitations from three or four gentlemen with long mustaches and foreign ways, who come to her and ask the pleasure of the dance. He thinks that young Signor Boccaccio, of the Italian Legation, holds her perchance a little too tightly as they circle in the mazes of the waltz, and that the eyes of Monsieur de Giers, of Belgium, sparkle too brightly as he leads her through a quadrille, and that young Billy Frostwater is altogether too chipper and bold as he suggests: "What do you say to moonlight in the tower with me, and champagne for *two*!"

But though Evie will dance with gentlemen she will not flirt with them—with Guernsey's eyes upon her.

Therefore she says laughingly to young Mr. Frostwater: "The tower is too chilly this evening. Persuade some other lady to the rheumatism."

"Oh, I will," remarks Mr. Billy with the usual effrontery of American youth. "There are lots of girls here and I *own* a few of them."

But Evie desires to know a few of these girls also, and Mr. Guernsey stares as he sees how much trouble she takes to make herself agreeable to those ladies with whom she is already upon speaking terms. Mrs. Montessor is very well aware that social distinction comes to a woman not from the attentions of men, but through the good offices of her own sex.

"I'll—I'll go out and smoke a cigar on the veranda," the Senator remarks, "while you talk to the ladies."

"Not at all. Let me present you to Mrs. Dacre of Washington. I know she would like to meet you."

And Mrs. Dacre does, being very proud and happy to encounter a new United States Senator of whom she intends to make a lion during the Washington season, for Senators are very great men in the capital though their merits are not so universally recognized throughout the country at large. Thus Evie parades her Senator very deftly, not as her conquest, but as her friend, a method that gives her social distinction, but does not make her enemies among her own sex.

A few minutes later the Senator gallantly invites the ladies into the restaurant for supper, and Evelyn, though she is hardly aware of it has done a very good social stroke for herself this evening, for Mrs. Dacre, though very modest at the Pier, is a grand dame in Washington and the *entrée* to her house is a little social stepping-stone at the capital.

They have a very pleasant hour of it over their lob-

sters and champagne; the party being joined by young Frostwater and the maiden he has honored by making his tower girl this evening. She chances to be the daughter of Mrs. Dacre and is a rather pretty, flippant miss of eighteen, who likes men to tell her they love her, if not with their tongues with their eyes; though sometimes she is accommodated by the tongue also.

Turning from this damsel, young Frostwater, who being adolescent likes ladies slightly his senior, devotes himself at the supper table to Evelyn, drinking carelessly from her glass and crying, "Oh, what delicious fizz. Ah, excuse my mistake. The Widow's glass. 'Twas the flavor of her lips!"

Effusions that make the Spanish lady glare with all her hawk's eyes and the Honorable James G. Guernsey cuss "Young America" under his breath.

Try as he will the Senator has no opportunity of *tête-à-tête* with Evie, and bids her good-bye at her door this evening somewhat disappointedly, though the lady suggests that she will be at the bathing place during the next forenoon.

"There will be plenty there," she says, "and if you don't take a dip in the surf you can enjoy looking on."

"Swimming is one of my grand holds!" replies the Senator impressively. "You can rely on me," and goes away somewhat mollified, and thinking over the matter, mutters, as he places another cigar to his lips: "I downed that financier anyway, and as for that young flippity-jib, Frostwater, she wouldn't go to the tower with him. Some day I'll try her on that excursion myself. Some day I'll—I'll make a darned fool of myself."

Though just what he means by this is not clear even in his own mind. All he knows is that the widow is prettier and more fascinating than even when his mustache brushed her wrist at Saratoga.

"Quite a society bird, too," he thinks. "And better looking than any of the high-falutins Chippie introduced me to at Newport."

As for the lady, she is discontented also. She is snarling at herself in the solitude of her dainty chamber, and muttering: "Thank God, even to-day he gabbled of his father being a *good* man! That is my safeguard. That keeps me from despising myself! That makes my conscience clear! He said his sister was traveling in Europe—in luxury! *Where is my sister?* Besides, he's *bad*, anyway; there must be some great, big, awful, BAD spot in him. He is the son of his father!"

Then, suddenly, blushes run over her fair cheeks and snowy shoulders, as she thinks: "Perchance some day I'll find out how wicked he really can be. Some day I may indeed want my duenna!"

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE GELATINE TRUST.

THE next morning, striding along Beach Row, the Honorable James B. Guernsey chances to encounter Mrs. Montessor without chaperone. She is in the freshest of white walking dresses, and greets the Senator very easily and affably.

"Suppose we walk down to the bathing booth," she suggests.

And the gentleman assenting, they stroll past the old-time affairs with their awnings in front of them, and from there on to Sherry's magnificent pavilion, where the band is playing. The scene is bright with color, the sky is blue, and the waves are as soft as if it were an Italian sea. The surf is filled with five hundred pretty girls and five hundred athletic young men, who are playing mermaids and mermen among the breakers, swimming out to the rafts and sporting generally with Neptune and Cupid at the same time.

"You think of indulging in a plunge?" queries the Senator, eagerly. Perchance he thinks his fair companion would look very well in a Narragansett bathing dress.

"Not this morning. Let us sit by Mrs. Dacre and listen to the band."

As they take chairs, Mr. Guernsey, from a passing newsboy, buys a copy of one of the New York papers of the morning, these journals arriving very promptly each day about the hour of noon.

While he glances over its columns the ladies chat. A minute after, their confidences are arrested by a suppressed execration from the Western gentleman, who

is biting his lips over something he is reading in the paper.

"What is the matter?" ask the ladies, Mrs. Dacre adding: "You use strong language!"

"The language of an insulted man. You'll excuse me, ladies, I forgot you were here; I forgot everything but this outrage. Look at it!"

And glancing at the paper Evie sees in bold type and strong headlines: "IN THE TOILS OF THE GELATINE TRUST—THE NEW SILVER SENATOR AND THE MAGNATE OF THE TRUST ON THE LATTER'S YACHT—CHAMPAGNE AND GELATINE DUTIES—ARE THE PEOPLE TO BE BETRAYED ONCE MORE?—WAS IT BY APPOINTMENT?"

Beneath them is half a column of telegraphic communication full of insinuations to a similar effect from the Pier, which have been sent by some enterprising reporter. Upon this subject there is also an editorial, hoping the young Senator has escaped and warning him of his danger.

"Isn't it an outrage!" cries Evie excitedly.

"It's an infernal calumny!" mutters Guernsey.

"It's a cruel shame!" ejaculates Mrs. Dacre.

A moment after the statesman mutters: "They've deprived me of a friend. Steinbergh and I would have been good companions. Not that it would have affected my vote on the bill. They cut me off from social intercourse with a man I liked as if every 'good morning' that passed between us was a cipher communication, and every glass of wine I drank with him was a bribe."

Evie looks serious also, for this surely shows her two things: "First; that the omnipresent reporter has his argus eye upon the Honorable James B. Guernsey, of Populoso, and that any decided flirtation with him will doubtless be noted and commented upon by the journals throughout the country. Second; that this is

probably an end of any intimacy between the Senator and Steinbergh, which will make her position more embarrassing." But a moment after she laughs to herself: "And *more powerful!* I will be The Gelatine Trust's last hope. I can now name my price and Steinbergh *must* pay it!"

Her musings are broken in upon by Guernsey remarking placidly: "Excuse my impatience, ladies! I have been commented upon by newspapers before, and my skin should have been thicker. To-day I am out for a lark, and I propose to throw care into the ocean." With this he tosses the paper into the surf that has run up the beach and is playing very close to the front of the pavilion.

And Guernsey this day *is* on a lark! His high spirits communicate themselves to Mrs. Dacre, who listens to his stories of the West, in one of which he stabs Evelyn, telling about his father saving a child from a bear and what a noble exponent of American civilization the old gentleman was, closing his eulogium by remarking, "My dad founded the orphan asylum, you know, at Silveropolis."

This hardens the widow's heart against him and her smiles were not so sunny as they would be if he would let his papa's memory alone; and she determines to play her game very cautiously. She knows she is dallying with edged tools; that this gentleman whose heart she proposes to gain and whose mind she proposes to influence is so high in the political world that any action of hers in regard to him will be noted. "Mr. Guernsey and myself," she cogently thinks, "must play our little rubber under an awning or an umbrella."

Therefore all this day though the Solon strives for *tête-à-tête* he gets very little; approaching more nearly perhaps to it than elsewhere upon the crowded

piazza of the Casino, to which place they stroll, as is the custom, to sit down and enjoy refreshments and music immediately before lunch.

Here he has a chance to say: "You are not treating me very well. Not as nicely as at Saratoga."

"No? Why?" queries the lady, pretending not to understand him.

"Well, up at the Springs I saw a good deal more of you, and other fellows saw a good deal less."

The lady has been talking with some passing gentlemen.

"Ah, there I had but few friends. Besides, you would not have reporters put my name in the naughty papers beside yours, would you?"

At this Mr. Guernsey grinds his teeth, as if the loss of Steinbergh was as nothing to the bar to intimacy that is now put on him.

"I wouldn't care," he says shortly.

"No?" And her open blue eyes look at him frankly.

"No, I'll be——" here he checks himself. "I'll be blessed if I would."

"Yes, but you must remember me," she murmurs; then falters impulsively, "Thank you for the compliment!" This last with a veiled glance that makes Guernsey that afternoon at the Gladstone eat his dinner in a joyous trance.

The next morning a telegraph boy brings a little yellow envelope to the villa, and opening it Evie gives a cry of joy.

"I know what that means," she thinks as she reads:

Please come to New York at once; I want to see you about an investment in stocks.

STEINBERGH.

"The first time it was *I* who asked him to invest. This time *he* makes petition," she laughs, and fortu-

nately catching the eleven o'clock train from Narragansett, is at the Waldorf that afternoon.

She has wired her address to the financier, and he calls upon her. "I am very much obliged to you for coming in this fearful hot weather to New York," he says. "Let us try to get a little cool air together. How would you like to drive to Fort Washington for dinner, and as we return, I will tell you something I have done for you."

"I'll go driving with you with pleasure," answers the lady. Then looking at him sighs: "I fear it must be for the last time."

"That is what I fear also," answers the financier, "and it is in that regard that I wish to speak to you."

Therefore, after dinner, by the pretty banks of the Hudson on the veranda of the hotel at Fort Washington, Mr. Steinbergh says diplomatically, yet almost pathetically: "I have been thinking of your future."

"Well, tell me about it."

"Not on this crowded portico! Somebody may have large ears. As we drive back together—if you will permit me I will send my groom to town by rail—there is no place more safe for important communications than the *tête-à-tête* of an open phaeton flying along the road."

"As you please," answers the lady.

A few minutes after, these arrangements have been made, and as they drive down St. Nicholas avenue, Mr. Steinbergh's pair of magnificent grays are their only confidants.

"I have been thinking of your future," remarks the financier. "I have suffered, for I have relinquished a hope——" here he can feel the lady at his side give a little start, but she is too diplomatic to ask what hope. "I see that you have determined upon a life in Washington. I will aid you to it. A very handsome apart-

ment magnificently furnished with the proper servants and an equipage will be at your service with sufficient money to properly support it. I have also taken the liberty, Mrs. Montessor, of speculating a little more for you in stocks. I hope you will pardon my assurance."

"I will," cries Evie excitedly, "if you *won*!"

"You're like the world," he laughs. "It will excuse anything but failure. But, as usual, I won. My brokers paid in on your account to-day ten thousand four hundred and seventy-five dollars and twenty-seven cents. Here is a statement of the sales and purchases. Here is their check for the amount attached and their account." He hands her an envelope.

"You are pardoned!" remarks Evie. "Now, with regard to my equipage. If I am to establish a carriage in Washington, I should also keep one at Narragansett; otherwise it might excite comment."

"Aha! What a business woman you are. You have a fine brain," replies Steinbergh. "What would you say to a pretty little pony phaeton and pair of high-steppers, with a nice little groom on the rumble, for the seaside?"

"Yes, a victoria also. I wish to do the thing properly." Then she adds: "And what do you expect for all this?"

His answer surprises her. She had expected a direct request for her aid. But the financier merely says: "Your friendship—your influence. At a certain time I shall make a certain investment for you. You know enough to be aware that if a stock that you hold goes up in the market, you make money. If a stock goes down, you lose money. Some day in the future I shall write to you that I have bought for your account and risk so many shares."

"Hundreds?" asks the lady anxiously.

"No, THOUSANDS!" answers Mr. Steinbergh calmly, "of a certain stock. You are bright enough to know that if a certain bill passes Congress you will be rich. But that if a certain bill does not pass Congress you'll be poor. Act then, at your pleasure."

"You're very kind," murmurs Mrs. Montessor. "You have always been good to me. You only now ask me to help myself, that is all."

Then she adds: "Please explain this matter a little further. If I am to aid you, I must understand the affair thoroughly. You say, if I hold the stock and it goes up, I make money. But this stock has gone down and I have made money, as well as I can see by the accounts."

"Yes, you were again a bear, a naughty bear, one of that kind of wicked people who sell things before they buy them. You see, we are—this is entirely a matter of confidence—we are compelled to force the stock to sell down in order that a certain number of our lawmakers at a proper time can buy at low figures. Then, of course, they will be anxious for their holdings to rise in value, and will pass the proper bill to make it go up! We are not bribing them—they are merely using some hints of ours to benefit their pockets."

"Oh, I see," answers Mrs. Montessor; "Gelatine stock will go down until Congress is in session and a number of its members buy it."

"Yes, and after they have bought it we may give them a little lesson, we may put it a little lower to stimulate them to exert themselves to add to its financial value—but this is confidential. On your honor you will say no word of it to any one. You are the only woman I would trust with such a secret. But we are at the Waldorf. I will say adieu, as I may not see you again soon."

So he goes away with a pathetic look in his eyes, for Steinbergh has given up something he has longed for very much, and women seem more beautiful as you know they are passing out of your life.

On going to her own room at the hotel, Mrs. Montessor inspects quite carefully the account of purchases and sales that the financier has handed to her. It is evident to her the stock was sold first and purchased a few days later at lower figures.

"Ah! Gelatine is going down," she says. "They are compelled to put it lower at least until Congress meets."

That is a month or two anyway. Then suddenly her bright eyes grow big with financial cunning. She thinks "Why should I not play bear also on my own account?" then cries "Aha! Mr. Steinbergh! I shall do for myself what you did for me. I have——" she looks at the check that the magnate has given her which bears the signature of a well-known stock broking firm, "the wherewithal to go short of Gelatine myself." And she laughs triumphantly, chuckling daintily at her fair self in the mirror. "You will be rich soon, you naughty lady bear speculator!"

Acting on this idea, the next morning Evie causes herself to be driven to the up-town office of a prominent firm of brokers and, depositing her check with them, directs them to sell as much of the Gelatine stock as they can for the money she has; reasoning, with greedy logic, "The more I sell, the more I make."

The gentleman in charge of their up-town office hesitates a little over this order, and advises her to sell in reason, but finally, urged by her, agrees to short for her account and risk three thousand shares of Gelatine stock, if she will give him what is technically called a "stop order" to close her out at three points up. This she willingly does, and goes away laughing to herself;

"He doesn't know much. How can it go *up* when the company are putting it *down*?"

But she never whispers a word to any one of Mr. Steinbergh's confidence; that, honor compels her to lock in her own fair bosom.

Six hours later, Mrs. Montessor is once more at Narragansett. Here, to her disappointment, she finds no Senator. Mr. Guernsey has run over to Newport at the invitation of his colleague, Mr. Chippie.

"He was very indignant," remarks the Senora, "that you had gone to New York without saying *adios* to him."

"Did you tell him I would return to-day?"

"Oh, yes, but he had business at Newport."

This is partly true and yet not altogether, as Mr. Guernsey is in a huff and he doesn't return from Newport for three or four days, which makes Evelyn contemplative.

She would be more uneasy did she know that a Newport widow with six unmarriageable daughters has put eyes upon the Western senator, who has been introduced to her by his colleague. This lady, Mrs. Josselyn, is, as regards blood and family, a member of the New York Four Hundred, as regards fortune—only a hanger on at its gayeties and fêtes. She has decided that Marjorie, her third unmarriageable child, is to become the Honorable Mrs. Guernsey. She has been in Newport angling for French Barons, Italian Counts and a scion or two of the British nobility, and having found them impossible without *dots*, has then said proudly: "I will be an American mother. My daughter shall marry one of her own noble countrymen, who care not to receive money with their brides."

In this view she has put her eyes upon the unfortunate Guernsey, and, as he remarks to himself, is giving him more trouble than the reporters.

Other things also would come in to the destruction of Evie's plans, if Guernsey would permit them. But it only takes a glance from her bright eyes to make him forget Newport fashionables and the terrors of the press.

But, just at this time, a financial accident occurs to Mrs. Montessor that causes her to shed some secret tears, but gives her an even firmer hold on the affections of the Western man, whose great big heart she has now got in both her tiny hands, giving him arterial throbs whenever she pleases.

On his return from Newport, Guernsey had reproached her with going away without saying good-bye to him. "That is the second time you have done that, Miss," he says. "Once in Saratoga you slipped away like a shadow in the night and now you flit again from Narragansett, making me think the spring water was no good in one place and the sea-bathing of no account in the other. Now the next time you play such a trick upon me, I'm going after you."

"With such a threat, I shall run away to-morrow!" cries Evie, laughingly.

"Don't make a joke of it," he mutters almost pathetically. "You don't know how your slights hurt me. Now I mean what I say, Sis!" he adds more sternly, playfully assuming a fatherly manner and taking her pretty ear between his thumb and forefinger.

It is his first approach to familiarity save when her wrist looked so temptingly beautiful to him by Lake Lonely, and he is rather anxious as to how she will take it.

But Evie is very well up in games of this kind, and though a delightful blush flies over her cheeks, she merely gives him a demure courtesy and murmurs, "Yes, sir!" which goes to his heart more than any.

thing she has done. For getting away from this interview he smites his broad breast and mutters: "Looks up to me! Yes, sir, looks right up to me and does what I tell her! She explained the matter, too, very well. She had business about some stocks she's interested in—Gelatine, I believe. I suppose she's quite comfortably fixed, too."

Mr. Guernsey has noticed a cute little pony phaeton with a dapper little groom standing in front of Evie's cottage, and has hoped to be asked to ride in it, but as yet has not reached that felicity.

Two days after he calls and is informed that Mrs. Montessor is too ill to see him.

"Too *ill*? Great thunder, what's the matter with her? She looked deliciously well half an hour ago on the veranda of the Casino."

"It's some awful news from some stealing stock-brokers," remarks Señora de Oriva savagely. "She has been beguiled, poor girl, into investing in that robber of a Wall street."

"Ask her if she won't see me. Ask her if I can help her in any way," mutters the Senator.

But Evie will not see him. She sends him a courteous message thanking him for his kind offer; and the next morning when he calls again he receives a little note which reads as follows:

DEAR MR. GUERNSEY: Many, many thanks for your kindness, but I suppose I have displeased you again. I have gone to New York on business. I could not accept the pleasure of your society on the trip. A moment's thought will tell you why. I shall be back to-morrow morning. Until then *au revoir*.

Most gratefully,

EVELYN MONTRESSOR.

This makes the Senator scowl. He demands interview with La Oriva, and questioning the duenna learns that it is some investment in stocks, the Gelatine, she thinks, that has robbed Evelyn of her wealth.

"Is it as bad as that?" falters Guernsey. And getting hold of a paper—for stock quotations are hard to obtain at Narragansett—he looks up the price of Gelatine stock, and mutters: "This is awfully curious. I can't understand it. Darn me if it hasn't gone up four points in the last two days."

And this is true. Evie's sickness had been brought about by an awful note from her brokers which read as follows:

DEAR MADAME: As the stock of the Gelatine Company has advanced this day three per cent. over your selling price, according to your written orders we have bought in for your account three thousand shares of the same and hold to your credit the sum of four hundred and seventeen dollars and seventeen cents, which is at your order.

Any further commands we shall be most happy to execute on receipt of sufficient margin for same.

Yours most respectfully,

M. DE CASTILIO & Co.

It is with this horrible note in her pocket and an anxious, pale, almost frightened face that Evie makes her way into the private office of Mr. Steinbergh in Wall Street. Her appearance is such that it really frightens the jovial financier.

"Great Heavens! What has happened?" he says hurriedly.

On this his fair client, though it hurts her pride woe-fully, is compelled to make revelation of her speculation on her own account.

"See the note those villains Castilio & Co. have sent me," she mutters, and goes into so pathetic a recital that Steinbergh, in spite of himself, laughs until the tears roll down his cheeks.

"Ah, my pet lamb in Wall Street has been shorn," he murmurs. "And what a greedy little lamb it was! Sold three thousand. I wondered where that stock came from. Besides, it inspired other short sellers to such an extent that we were compelled to put the

market up on them. However, I think I can repair the damage to your pocket, as I have most of your money in my own bank account at the present moment, barring a little lost from the friction of finance, commissions, etc. But you must not speculate. Promise me that. Only speculate when I tell you to."

"Very well," mutters Evie, half sullenly, for his merriment has a tinge of sarcasm that hurts her business pride. "Work out my account for me. Here it is." She hands him the statement of Castilio & Co.

"With pleasure," he says, "and furthermore I think you had better provide your own equipages and select your own apartments in Washington. Any effort of mine in that way in your behalf might be misunderstood, if known."

"Yes, that is much better, kind Mr. Steinbergh," cries Evie.

Then she is very penitent, and promises to use every influence to make the Gelatine stock go up, that he will buy for her when the proper time comes, and goes away much relieved.

She receives, however, much greater comfort a week after this, when she gets a note from dear, good, kind Castilio & Co., inclosing a statement of certain operations they have made at her order, and stating that a balance of over fifteen thousand dollars is to her credit with that well-known firm.

But Mr. Guernsey does not agree with Evie in her ideas of Wall Street. On her return he has cursed stock-brokers up and down and black and white, muttering: "Been robbing you, eh! Wait until I get at 'em in the United States Senate," in a way that has frightened her—for she wants her Senator to be very mild with the Gelatine Trust the coming session.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE AMBIGUOUS KISS.

BUT just about this time a certain young gentleman of pale, romantic complexion, very dark eyes, very white teeth, very short black hair and very long mustachios, bearing the name of Gonzalo de Oriva, makes his appearance upon the scene and Guernsey forgets the god of money in the demon of jealousy.

This Gonzalo is a creature of freaks, sensations, and sudden frenzies. He steps into Evelyn's life almost in the theatrical manner of the modern drama, a mass of impetuous passion and amatory fire-works.

It is a day of triumph at Narragansett! The great polo game between the Rockaways and Myopias is to take place at the Country Club, and Newport is coming over to take a look at it. Around the green turf of the Polo field is gathered a mass of equipages, from four-in-hand drag to donkey cart; all covered with pretty women in *chic* summer toilettes, with parasols galore and flaunting ribbons and rustling laces that gleam under the summer sun.

"The Newport swells are here in force, aren't they? But they'll find the Pier up to date," says Billy Frostwater to Mrs. Montessor, as he leans against the big patent leather dashboard of her phaeton. "'City-by-the-Sea' girls may be *fin-de-siècle*, but I'm hanged if they're as pretty as our surf paddlers." And he eyes critically Mrs. Josselyn, who has brought over her third unmarried daughter, Marjorie, to make another attempt on the heart of the Honorable Mr. Guernse.

These ladies are sitting in a nearby victoria, and the Senator is just taking his hat off to them.

"Our Honorable friend seems to be quite chummy with Newport," he goes on. "My, doesn't the girl eye him! See how she blushes! Every pimple on her face loves him. You don't know 'em, do you?"

"No; I haven't sufficient fortune to swim in the Newport pool," remarks Evie, perchance a little bitterly, though she controls herself quite well, knowing that young Mr. Billy is intent on giving her a pang in return for the many she has given him in the last month or two, as she has refused that gentleman champagne *tête-à-têtes* in the tower; for young Mr. Frostwater would like, as he expresses it to himself, "to make a mash on the widow"—girls have palled on his palate—only she will not let him.

A few minutes after Mr. Guernsey, straying from the side of the Newport victoria, strolls over to Evelyn's pretty pony phaeton, to get a shock in his turn. A short-haired, dark-eyed, white-toothed man is sitting in the place that he considers his own, and is gazing romantically into the sapphire eyes of Mrs. Montessor. The next moment Evelyn begs to present Señor Gonzalo de Oriva to the Honorable Mr. Guernsey, mentioning the young man, who has a haughty yet romantic air, as the son of her chaperone, who has just returned from Cuba.

"Yes, with my life I escaped," murmurs the gentleman. "They would have liked my blood, for I am, mark you, *Señor Senador*, a man whose heart the Queen of Spain would delight to dine off."

"Is she so hungry as that, poor queen?" remarks the Senator, grimly.

"But I have escaped her teeth," continues Gonzalo, whose thoughts are apparently only on himself, "to be the victim of another lady, at whose service my heart

is." And he places his hand upon his breast and bows down before Evelyn, who deigns to blush becomingly under the young Spanish gentleman's impassioned glances.

But he gives no chance for answer, crying: "Ah! they are running after the ball again. *Caramba!* that was a stroke worthy of a *caballero*;" then mutters savagely: "Cut their hearts out! Down with them, the accursed Blues! Ah, one of the *ladrones* is killed, his horse has rolled on him. Slay him before he rises!"

With this Gonzalo makes his way excitedly toward a portion of the field where an unfortunate Rockaway man has come to grief on account of his pony falling.

"What's the matter with him?" asks the Senator grimly. "Is he crazy?"

"No," laughs Evelyn, "only I am wearing the Myopia colors and Señor Gonzalo thinks it his duty to wish the opposing Rockaways death. I had no idea he was so impassioned or I should not have asked him to come with me," murmurs the lady, bushing vividly as she remembers some of the Spaniard's raptures during *tête-à-tête* drive in the widow's phaeton.

"You—you drove *him* over?" says Guernsey in austere voice.

"Yes, why not? I had to have a gallant, and you were not available. You came here with Mrs. Josselyn and daughter. Ah, the aristocratic Mr. Chippie has introduced you to Newport blue blood."

"Not to your disadvantage, madame, by Heaven!" mutters the Solon, for the widow has emphasized her plaint with a veiled glance that makes the statesman's heart feel very young.

But romance gives way to the sports of the chase, as Evie is laughing until the tears are in her eyes, and crying: "See Johnson's dog!"

For a yellow-haired Irish terrier, to the rage of th

polo teams, is making a raid upon the ball almost under the feet of the ponies. "Look! Bobby Scott is making for him," shrieks Evie. "If that young centaur gets a crack at Johnson's pup, he will never appear in the dog show again."

But Johnson's dog scurries wildly from the avenging polo mallet of Mr. Scott, of the Myopias, and takes refuge in the crowd, where his master does not appear to own him.

From this episode the Cuban returns to the fair widow's side, remarking: "If I could have caught the cur, I would have presented Señor Scott with his heart this afternoon at the Casino. He wears your colors. He rides like a *vaquero*. He cares no more for his horse than a *toreador*." Then Gonzalo turns to the statesman, and, with an affable wave of his hand, remarks: "Your ladies are looking anxiously for you, Señor *Senador*. See! the señorita with the white parasol and spotted face waves her hand unto you."

As this is unfortunately true, Guernsey takes his way from the widow's phaeton toward the Newport equipage and Mrs. Josselyn and her third unmarried daughter Marjorie, whose vivid summer freckles Señor Gonzalo has, in his limited knowledge of English, designated as "spots."

With this, coolly seating himself by the widow's side in her phaeton, Señor de Oriva goes into a tropic frenzy, and looking at her beautiful eyes and exquisite figure, is very full of Romeo antics.

As they drive home, he gazes at her and makes his big eyes look like coals of fire. She shudders, for she is growing somewhat frightened of him, as he mutters: "To-day for the first time, I LIVE!"

"A baby one day old?" giggles Mrs. Montessor nervously. Her laugh is almost echoed by her groom Sammy in the rumble behind, who is struggling to keep

the straight face of a flunkey. What must not these poor creatures suffer who have witty masters?

"One day old, but *not* a baby. One day old! One day of love! A baby this morning, a man to-night! Perhaps a corpse to-morrow morning. No telling." Then he mutters in Spanish pathos: "You must be kind to your poor Gonzalo. Were he to die his mother's heart would break."

But Evelyn has made up her mind to at least curb Gonzalo's tongue if she cannot control his eyes, and takes this opportunity, saying merrily: "I hope you will kill yourself."

"*Dios!* You command me to suicide?"

"Yes. I have never had a man kill himself for me yet. I would like to discover how it feels. I think I could bear your loss perhaps better than I could that of others."

"*Santos!* There are *others!*" he hisses, next mutters sardonically, "*Diablo!* You wish me to commit suicide. Then I shall not do eet. Your manner, your indifference, your cold heart tells me I have a rival." Here he grinds his teeth together. "It ees *him* I will slay! Ah, you are afraid. But I would not hurt you. Not one hair of gold, not one tress will Gonzalo touch, save to kees and to caress."

"You will not even do it for that purpose," mutters Mrs. Montessor, checking her horses suddenly at the gate of her cottage garden, and, springing out, she runs into the house, leaving Señor Gonzalo alone with dapper little Sammy, who has sprung to the horses' heads.

"*Muchacho!*" remarks the Cuban, sternly; but getting no response to this, he cries out, savagely, "Boy!"

"Yes, sir," replies Sammy, touching his hat and holding out his hand for a quarter, which he does not get; for Señor Gonzalo remarks, in deepest tones "Boy,

if you utter a word of what I told the beautiful lady in the carriage, I will cut your heart out. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," says Sammy and touches his hat. And as he drives back to the stable the horses half determine on a bolt, for they feel that little Sammy's hold on their bits is very weak, nervous, and trembling.

These and similar Romeo antics of the Cuban make Guernsey's life one of anxiety at Narragansett. The season is drawing to its close, he is compelled to leave for the West on urgent personal business, but still he lingers by the sea. "I can't bear to leave her a prey to this cursed foreign adventurer," he thinks; and yet he cannot bring himself to take decisive action, reasoning: "If I fire this Cuban *out*, may I not fire myself *in*?"

As for Evie she doesn't wish the Senator to take decided action either, not until Congress is in session and the Gelatine bill has been passed, and she pursues the game of waiting very warily, playing her fish with the ease of a feminine Isaac Walton, sometimes drawing her prey toward her as if she meant to land him, next letting him have his head and run away with the line and sulk under the shade of the green bushes that line love's stream.

But strategy is brought to a sudden close by the action of the fiery Gonzalo.

They are all three sitting on the porch of the cottage one evening. The Senator has been hinting that he has to go West.

"Pshaw!" laughs Evie, "you've been saying that for a week or two."

"Yes, it has seemed to me you have been going for a very long time," remarks the Cuban. "Day by day I have expected to have the honor of bidding you *adios*."

"Young man," replies Guernsey, "that needn't keep you here in Narragansett."

"*Santos*, I know what you are staying for!" returns Gonzalo, "and it is not surf bathing." Then he breaks out: "But I don't blame you. I eat my heart out also! There is a so cruel, but a so beautiful, woman, who demands the love of all men—the lady of the smiling face and the blue, blue eyes! O, *Dios mio*! When I think, I would have been happier if the Queen of Spain had eaten my heart!"

"Why don't you go over and give it to her Majesty?" remarks Guernsey. "According to you she's been waiting for the meal for a long time."

"*Por Dios*! But not till I have spoken once more. I have tried the language of the eyes, but she will not understand. If you were like me, a man of grand sentiment, not the hard-headed *Americano* that you are, *Señor*, you would speak also. Some day I will demand *which of us*! Some day I will say, 'If you go riding with *him*, I ride with you no more.'"

"Will you give me a drive in your pony phaeton to-morrow, Mrs. Montessor?" remarks the Senator suddenly—almost desperately.

"With pleasure!" replies Evie, then bursts into a subdued snicker, for, with a groan of anguish, Gonzalo has suddenly sprung to his feet, looked at her with wild eyes, and muttering, "You stab me to the heart!" rushed down the path, thrown open the gate, and disappeared in the direction of his hotel.

"I'll call for you to-morrow afternoon early," says the Senator, a lump in his throat, for he fears the Rubicon has been passed. Then he adds ardently: "You'll—you'll give me a long drive, won't you? I'm—I'm going away very, very soon."

"Will from three to six be enough for you?" remarks Mrs. Montessor, a little nervously, for she fears the ride as well as the Senator.

"Yes," he replies, then mutters: "You are very

good," and suddenly the fair wrist feels masculine mustache upon it, as he goes away, leaving Evie anxious and agitated.

During the night she thinks the matter over. "What does he mean to say to me? Does he—?" she cries, then murmurs faintly: "Does he mean—? Pshaw! I can prevent his speaking until after the bill!" Then jeers herself: "Is this your firmness, is this your resolve, you who said you would be his Cleopatra?" A moment after she mutters: "I—I will make him talk of that ineffable villain, his father. When he gets to prattling of the good deeds of that man who robbed me of my sister it always makes me hate him. Then I can play my game beautifully—superbly, as Aspasia flaunted it with Pericles."

And the next day she does play her game beautifully—superbly.

When Mr. Guernsey strolls up to the cottage on that bright September afternoon, he sees her pony phaeton standing in front of it. At the horses' heads is the natty little groom who has for the last month essayed the part of Evie's chaperon on several *tête-à-tête* drives with the Senator.

Looking on him the statesman cogitates grimly: "Wouldn't I like to leave you behind?"

A moment after the sight of his charmer, as she comes out upon her veranda to meet him, drives all else from his thoughts; and Evie is worthy of his full consideration, for this day she has made up her mind to charm.

"I will at least leave a recollection in his heart," she has thought, and her toilet is one to dream of—to swear by. White, her favorite color, robes her from her marble neck to her dainty feet, save at the waist and bosom; the first being surrounded by a broad sheeny scarf of daintiest pink, the second adorned with fresh, dewy blush roses.

Besides, there is a good deal of color in her cheeks as the Senator, possessing himself of her hand, whispers: "I must take care of you—you're very thoughtless."

"Why?"

"You're going out for a drive in slippers! Suppose we get a fog? Since you won't take care of yourself, I will look after you. Trip up-stairs again and put on boots."

"Pshaw! these slippers match my costume; besides, I didn't suppose you would look at them," she demurs archly.

"Not look at those little feet? I have an eye for beauty, madame," he laughs. Then affecting sternness, he commands, "Trot up-stairs, Miss! Skip! Fly!"

Here Evie astonishes him by flying, for she generally has had her own dainty way.

Two minutes after she comes back and remarks demurely: "How does this suit you?" as she coquettishly pokes out an exquisite foot and dainty ankle hosed and booted in white to perfection, then looks into his face with great big eyes and murmurs: "Tyrant!" a word that always goes to the masculine heart, for it indicates dominion that they love.

And he, looking down at her, thinks: "The darling! If she obeys me she must——"

He does not complete the thought, its rapture chokes him.

Two minutes after they are seated in the carriage, the little groom jumping on to the rumble behind, as Evie asks, "Where?"

"How would Worden's Pond suit you?"

"First rate, if the ponies don't object."

So Evie whips up her horses, and they are soon flying along the Wakefield road, which, like most other Narragansett drives, is one of the best upon

earth, especially after a slight shower, which makes its gravel and sand a perfect roadbed.

Thus they journey on through Wakefield, leaving pretty Peacedale to their right, and a few minutes after, turning from the direct road to Matunac, pass along a narrow and rather sandy country lane between green hedges and copses, then on through grassy fields, till at length they reach a point giving them glance of beautiful Worden's Pond, the biggest lake near Narragansett, and one that compares in beauty of scenery and exquisite shadow effects even with the clear, cold meres of the Berkshires.

Here Evie checks the horses, and as they look upon the view Guernsey remarks: "Do you know I once thought of giving a picnic in your honor here? But you ran away to New York, so I gave up the affair. I had already selected the ground. Would you like to walk down and see it? It's a spot that's a hummer for romance."

He says this last appealingly, but with determination.

"Yes!" murmurs Evelyn, growing pale for a minute, then blushing to her eyes, for she knows the time has come.

At her word, he assists her from the carriage, and, pulling down some bars for her, they enter a green field. A cow or two grazing within it look curiously at them, wondering why these visitors are here, for it is a lonely yet beautiful spot.

Two hundred yards farther on, they come to a stone fence that separates them from the wooded paddock leading down to the lake. The gate of this is locked

"Do you mind a little climb?" he whispers.

"Not—not very much," falters the lady, looking with anxiety at her imported toilet.

"I—I won't ruffle a feather in it," remarks Guernsey, confidently.

The next moment he astonishes her, for with the agility of the plains he springs upon the stone wall, which is not a very high one, and stooping down lifts her up and swings her over with the ease and precision of iron muscle and well-trained biceps.

"I—I didn't know you were so strong," she murmurs, looking at him, a strange admiration in her eyes.

"You see out West a man leads a pretty rough-and-tumble life and has to know how to handle himself," he answers; then chuckles, "besides, I don't believe you weigh over half a ton."

"No, I don't," she says, laughingly. "A hundred and forty-five pounds isn't half a ton."

Then together they stroll down to the shores of Worden's Pond; not quite to its edge, however, for the ground is slightly swampy.

Sitting down under a tree they gaze out over its surface that reflects the shadows of the clouds in the distance, and nearer to them is ornamented by masses of pond lilies, whose summer flowers have long since died, but whose green leaves look cool and refreshing as they float upon the water. This they both gaze at, until silence becomes impressive.

Then the Senator, who has apparently something on his mind, says suddenly: "You like the view?"

"Oh, very much!" she murmurs, enthusiastically.

"I am glad you do, but that isn't why I brought you here."

"No?" And blue eyes open in pretense of astonishment.

"No! I wanted to be away from the long ears of your bottle green groom." Then he goes on very earnestly, almost a tremble in his strong voice: "I leave for the West this evening. I have to take my sister, who has returned from Europe, back to Silveropolis, and I have a few things to tell you."

"What—what are they?" queries the lady, tapping her pretty white boot with the end of her parasol.

"I am going away for months. I am compelled to put my business interests in such shape that I can leave them, devoting my whole time to my senatorial duties during the session of Congress, and, when I come back, I want to find you just the same girl as when I leave you. Will you promise that?"

He is looking at her, so full of admiration, so full perhaps of passion, that her eyes droop under his gaze, and her face for a moment grows very pale, then suddenly blushing as a rose. She does not answer him; she merely taps her boot with the ferrule of her parasol.

"You see," he goes on, "wild mustangs couldn't drive me from you, but I have a duty. I have to settle up the estate of my father—who was the most noble and generous man the earth has covered." He sighs here. "He left my sister half of his estate."

"That was whole-hearted in him, exceedingly," remarks the lady, sarcastically.

"It was, for she has no claim of blood upon him. She is simply my adopted sister, but I love her, and want to do something more than my duty in seeing that her property comes to her in a little better shape and a little more gilt-edged than even my father expected."

"What a *good* man your father must have been?" exclaims Evelyn, and her eyes blaze up, indignation in them. Then, not trusting herself, she rises hastily and walks away.

"Why, Great Scott! you are not jealous of—of my sister!" cries Guernsey, running after her.

"Jealous? I! What right have I to be jealous?" Here she forces herself to calmness and turning to him says: "I'll give you my answer to your rather curious proposition this evening, before you go."

"You are not mad?" falters Guernsey.

"Mad? Oh, no," and Evie walks ahead of him, for the mention of his father has set her blood boiling and she thinks: "If I speak to him now I shall tell him what an accursed scoundrel his sainted parent was, and that will spoil my plan for his destruction and my triumph. He *must* be bad. He has his father's blood. No man could call such a man as his father *good* and not be a villain himself, a hypocrite also."

Therefore she speeds ahead of him, careless of his warning, "Look out, Sis, you'll splash those nice white shoes in the bog!"

But this recklessness, perchance, only makes her more alluring, for she is a very dazzling sight as she runs along ahead of the Western senator, holding up dainty white skirts from beneath which flash out the two prettiest feet and ankles in Narragansett in ball-room hosiery and summer flirtation boots.

Finally the stone wall stops her and she turns about, a mass of laughter, blushes, and confusion. Ah! what an actress she is!

Here Guernsey, overtaking her, says: "You little runaway colt you, do you know you're as pretty as—and tantalizing as—"

"As what?"

"As yourself." With this the athlete of the plains springs on the stone fence and swings her over again, giving her waist a squeeze that makes her utter a faint shriek of bashful astonishment; for Guernsey had never permitted himself such liberty before, but somehow he has grown bolder now.

"Have another race for the next fence?" cries Evie laughingly, for she has an idea that perchance this gentleman may heap Ossa on Pelion and supplement the squeeze with a kiss. Therefore, she dashes with fairy feet towards the road upon which stands her

argus-eyed little groom, to whose protection she is flying, pursued by the statesman, who gazes admiringly, as he runs, upon this fair-haired, blue-eyed Atalanta.

Then they drive very comfortably back to Naragansett, and though Mr. Guernsey would broach the subject once more, Evie puts him aside always with these words: "Wait until you bid me good-bye this evening."

At the gate she says: "Don't come in—give me an hour or two to think. You leave at half-past eight to-night. Come to me at eight o'clock; then I will give you one-quarter of an hour. Until then, *au revoir*."

"So long!" remarks Guernsey, and goes away; but at Sherry's Casino, when they place the finest of dinners before him he has no appetite. He drinks, however, a pint of champagne, which is something unusual for a senator from a prohibition State.

As for the lady, she *does* think! She has been astonished at Guernsey's reference to his sister by adoption, but she is not jealous of her. She mutters sneeringly to herself: "Jealous of *him*! Jealousy means love, and I have only hate—yes, that 's what I do, *I hate him*! When he talks of his *good* father and this adopted sister, I cry, 'Where is my sister?'" A moment after she jeers. "We have both been going it blind as to family!"

And this is true; Mrs. Montessor has not dared to ask about the Senator's domestic ties, lest *her* questions may provoke *his* queries, for she divines that Claude, the ex-husband, would be an unpleasant revelation to him.

Then suddenly she falters: "What does he mean to ask me, when he comes back from the West?" and growing pale, trembles and blushes.

But that evening she is ready with her answer.

They are alone together, for Señora de Oriva is busied with household duties. Evelyn, sitting in the shadow of the porch, whispers to him: "I will do what you wish. Listen to me. I shall go to a retired country place in Vermont. I need rest after the troubles of a summer campaign and the anxieties of a declining fortune. In that view it will suit me to economize, for my Gelatine stock is—is going down." This last very pathetically. Then she continues: "I shall spend the winter in Washington. If you call upon me there, you will find me just the same girl as you left behind you, save that I shall be two months older and two months less attractive."

"Thank God!" mutters the Senator.

"What, for being two months older and two months less attractive?"

"No, no; thank God, I shall find you just the same little girl."

And now Evelyn plays a trump card.

"Remember, after this," she falters, blushingly, "I—I shall have a right to be jealous."

"And so have I," he answers sharply, then goes on severely: "How about that cussed Cuban?"

"Oh, I have arranged for him. He has received a telegram and gone to boil gelatine in one of Mr. Steinbergh's great factories."

"And Mr. Steinbergh?" This is hitting very close.

"What of him?"

"Well, I'm not as much afraid of the Cuban as I am of Mr. Steinbergh."

"Pooh! that is nothing. That gentleman has merely acted in a fiduciary capacity for me in my investments. Besides, if you wish, I will not see Mr. Steinbergh again until you return."

"Thank God for that," replies the Westerner. Then he astonishes her, this man who has been at times so

diffident, for he steps to her and taking audacious clasp of her white arm, leads her into the parlor. A subdued light from a lamp partly illuminates the room. They are alone.

"Stand in front of me!" he commands.

"Yes, sir," says Evie playfully, courtesying to him.

Then comes the sensation! He takes her beautiful face between his firm hands, and bending down makes her entrancing lips his own in the strong kiss of dominant manhood; then mutters huskily "I put this kiss on your lips when I go away. Let me have the same one back when I return!"

"O-o-o-h!" falters the lady, and sinks down a beautiful mass of exquisite blushes and bashful confusion as Guernsey, striding down the path, mutters to himself: "I'm boss of that cottage!" then sighs: "Great Scott! Two months—I shan't see her for two months!"

Ten minutes after he gets a sensation himself! He is seated by the open car window just as the engine is ready to draw him away from Narragansett. Even as the train starts, through the open window into his lap is flung a bunch of sweet smelling posies, and he hears Evie's voice say coquettishly: "Good-bye, Mr. Tyrant!"

Then Guernsey, as he rides away from her feels happier than if he was sure of being the dark horse for the Presidential nomination.

BOOK III.

THE CAMPAIGN IN WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. MONTRESSOR'S DINNER PARTY.

It is the early winter.

Congress has been talking for a month! Washington is seething under the revenue and tariff bill!

The corridors of the great hotels are full of it, as it is discussed by manufacturers and merchants whom it may make rich or poor in its changing schedules of duties.

The Capitol is crowded; the Upper and Lower Houses are full of legislators, each intent upon getting his finger in the financial pie. The committee rooms of the Senate and the House are besieged by seekers after office, pension agents pressing special claims, representatives of the great iron firms after government contracts and appropriations, and the lobbies of the magnificent building are thronged by politicians from everywhere, each for himself, first, last and forever; their parties second, their country nowhere in the race for wealth and preferment, in which statesmanship is forgotten, and even truth, justice, and personal honor are as naught to the almighty dollar, which reigns supreme beneath the great dome from

which the statue of Freedom gazes on the struggle for power and pelf.

From out this *mélange* of things inimical to honest legislation, the Honorable James B. Guernsey, fresh from his oath of office, comes striding up Connecticut avenue, and is ushered by a darkey page into Mrs. Montessor's pretty apartment in Washington.

This is charmingly located, near enough to the Dupont circle to be fashionable and not too far from the principal hotels to be easily accessible to sojourners in the national capital.

As the servitor takes his card to the mistress of the domicile, Mr. Guernsey looks about and murmurs to himself: "By Ginger, if my eyes see straight, this is luxury."

And his eyes do see very straight; for Mrs. Montessor's flat is not only spacious, but elegant in its fittings, luxurious in its furniture and charming in its bric-à-brac and pictures.

The very handsome drawing-room, in which the gentleman from the West stands, opens by folding doors into a dining-room just large enough for a cozy dinner party. Out of the parlor on the other side, its entrance half hid by graceful satin draperies, is the pretty little room Evie calls her boudoir, which communicates directly with her own private apartment. All these open upon a very handsome and spacious hallway, and are charmingly lighted by windows looking out upon one of the great avenues of Washington, which is now in the height of its political season, though its social one is hardly so far advanced.

Looking at its satin draperies, its gilded furniture, its Sevres, bric-à-brac, and the pretty paintings on its walls, some of them apparently signed by well-known artists—and all of them forgeries—Mr. Guernsey emits a prolonged whistle, and, turning his head

in the direction of a bronze bust of Daniel Webster that gazes at him from its olynx pedestal, he remarks confidentially to the dead statesman's image: "This must cost money, Dan!"

He is correct in this also, for Evie has determined, upon this Washington campaign, that she will play her hand boldly, grandly!—and has squandered the fifteen thousand dollars made for her in stocks with the prodigality of a gamester hazarding all on a last grand *coup*! What matters it if the wine bill is high, if she wins, the table is heaped with gold.

With this idea she has set up a very smart little equipage with stylish driver, but does not sport a footman on her brougham, judging it would make her too conspicuous in the national capital, where this convenient luxury is not so common as in sumptuous New York.

Even as the Senator inspects the cage of this dainty bird, he hears a little cry, he thinks of joy, and a moment after Evie's radiant face is put through the portières of her boudoir, and she cries to him: "Wanderer, come in!"

The next second Guernsey is in her sanctum, an exquisite little place with a general blue effect in its draperies and furniture, brightened by a ceiling decorated with arch Cupids and love-sick goddesses, who seem to be engaged in a flowery dance.

"You see, I don't make company of you," she whispers demurely, glancing at a teagown which becomes her very prettily.

"Thank God you don't!" he mutters, looking at her, then steps to her, and asks, almost solemnly: "Where's the kiss I gave you to keep for me?"

But, with airy lightness, she has flown to refuge behind a chair, and, gazing at him from its satin upholstery, murmurs riantly: "I lost it; it isn't here," touching her fair lips,

"Great Goliah! Not there?" he falters through trembling lips, and his strong face twitches; but, before he suffers too much, she laughs: "Flora stole it, up in Vermont."

"Flora? She doesn't count!" cries the Senator. "You little minx, how dare you joke with my feelings?"

A wave of joyous relief flies over him, and, before his temptress can dodge, he has sprung to her side, and, with vigorous ardor and great *empressement*, taken her pretty face in his hands, looked into her blue eyes, which answer him frankly, and taken back from the sweet, red lips the kiss he had placed upon them in Narragansett. This he does with a solemnity that would make Evie laugh, did not nervousness overcome risibility; his kiss was so strong, his arms so masterful.

Then she gives an affrighted "Oh, Heavens!" for Doc. Guernsey drops into a convenient chair, and with one athletic whisk Evelyn suddenly finds herself seated like a school girl on his knee, while he is saying: "Now, sissy, tell me all about it. What have you done since I've been away?"

But blushing astonishment and bashful confusion overcome her. She hides her face from his earnest eyes, pouts deliciously, and makes one or two ineffectual struggles to leave her childish position. But his arm about her waist is too strong and he stays her by remarking dominantly, even severely: "Stay quiet!"

Finding struggles unavailing, Mrs. Montessor turns to her captor, and opening her blue eyes, murmurs: "How dare you catechise me? I should catechise you. Three months away and not a line, a word, a telegram."

"No, I was busy. You see I was worried. I had a troublesome lawsuit on my hands about some land my noble father left to The Orphans' home in Silveropolis

—what makes you so savage ?” he adds suddenly, for at the mention of his father Evelyn has become restive again and her face angry and excited.

“ You—you never sent me a word,” pouts the lady, finding easy and complimentary excuse for temper.

Thereupon Mr. Guernsey gives her some of the many excuses of men who hate to write, but would like to be written to. Then he adds reproachfully: “ Why didn’t you send me a line ? You had my address, I didn’t have yours. Were you in Vermont ? ”

“ Yes, near Brattleboro. I—I was saving up so I could come here for the winter.”

“ Any visitors ? ”

“ Flora.”

“ Any gentlemen visitors ? That cursed Hidalgo, for instance ? ”

“ None whatever, though I wrote Mr. Steinbergh.”

“ Aha ! ”

“ Only once, about my stocks that are still going down—down,” she murmurs, plaintively ; then goes on more vivaciously: “ And now, since I have said my catechism like a good girl, permit me to escape. Please—Pythagoras will see you.”

“ Pythagoras ? Who in the deuce is he ? ”

“ My crispy-haired darkey page. Besides, if my butler came in he perhaps wouldn’t understand that you are ‘ papa Guernsey.’ ”

“ I’m hanged if I am ‘ *papa* Guernsey,’ ” mutters the Senator, making a wry face. Then he says: “ You’d better call me Jim.”

“ *En tête-à-tête*,” murmurs the lady, archly. Then she stammers, blushing: “ You—you can call me Evie when we’re alone. Don’t forget—*only* when we’re alone.”

“ All right, sissy,” remarks the Solon, complacently. Then he says, rapture in his voice: “ Why you look

just as young as a schoolgirl. A naughty child who is taken on the knee to be lectured."

"No doubt, I feel rebellious," laughs Evie. "Yes, and savage, too. Not one little letter! Bear—wicked, grizzly bear—I will pull your whiskers!" And she seizes, in two soft white hands, Guernsey's long mustache and gives it some infantile but vivacious tugs, as she kicks her two pretty little pink slippers about, that frisk under the laces of her teagown, giving delicious glimpses of openwork hosiery, and altogether making a very charming portrayal of innocent, vigorous, romping, naughty, spoilt little girlhood.

Upon this the Senator gazes admiringly, guffawing: "Cute baby! Was it savage with its chick-a-biddy? It shall have the kiss of peace."

But Evie suddenly dodging the kiss of peace, springs up crying, with clapping hands: "I forgot! You must go away! My dinner party! My dinner party!"

"Dinner party?"

"Yes, I shall now state that it is in your honor. I have made quite a hit here socially. We're in the swim," she laughs, then goes on more quietly: "Congress has been in session a month and you have been away. I was not surprised at your forgetting me, but I was astonished at your neglecting the interests of your country, Mr. Senator!" This last with attempted severity.

"Oh, the Senate hasn't done anything while I have been out of my seat."

"No," she replies, "that's the trouble. The country is crying out for it to do something, but it only talks, *talks*, TALKS! You know, I'm going to be your political mentor; I'm going to teach you what the country wishes you to do, then you'll do it like a good boy, won't you, Jimmie?"

This 'Jimmie' is said so easily, that Guernsey

astutely reasons: "Goliath! she must have been thinking of me by that name for a good while!" And it gives him such a thrill of rapture, that instead of telling her, as he might have done, that he would shape his own political course, he says brightly: "We'll see about that, miss," then laughs. "I shall take counsel with our great Daniel—I see you've got him here to remind me of my duties."

"Oh, yes!" she says airily, "make Dan'l your mentor—I *own* Dan'l!"

This remark is scarcely a happy one. It suggests property rights in the present senator as well as the dead one. Noting this in Guernsey's face, Evie breaks in suddenly:

"Now for my dinner party. Three of your *confrères* of the upper House are to be present—Mr. Raleigh, Mr. Chippie, and Mr. Bostwick."

"Great Scott! is the aristocratic Chippie coming?" murmurs Guernsey, astonished and perchance somewhat impressed.

"Oh, yes, he drops in often, but Mrs. Chippie hasn't called yet; that will come in time. Besides, Mr. and Mrs. Sloville, of the lower House, Madame de Montpensier and I will invite Georgie Parsons, the brightest girl in Washington, for you. She will drop in and accommodate me. She's always ready for a dinner. Besides, there's two or three more gentlemen and ladies. How convenient it is I only invited fourteen! Now I can make room for two more at my table. This will be delightful. You'll take it as your informal welcome to Washington, won't you, J—Jim? But I must drive you away. I have to dress. Where are you stopping?"

"At Chamberlin's," replies the Senator.

"Very well, then; run away, Jimmie, run away."

"If you call me Jimmie, I'll never get out of the

house," whispers Guernsey. "Besides, I don't budge till I get the kiss Flora stole from me."

This he obtains after a vivacious and most piquant skirmish, and departing, thinks as he strides down Connecticut Avenue: "Isn't she a brick? Never pursued me by a telegram, never bothered me by a letter, never compelled me to write a word to her, and hang me if she isn't just a little prettier and just a little sweeter than when I left her at Narragansett."

As for his charmer, she gazes after her senator and mutters: "You villain! You are just as bad as your vile father. Those kisses shall cost you as much as— as Cleopatra charged Antony." Then suddenly a great wave of color flies over her face; the next instant she is pale, trembling, frightened, and falters: "If I should ever love him! Oh, God, I pray thee, not *that*! not *THAT*!"

For Guernsey's kisses have somehow been pleasant to her, and the Senator has a fine figure, and a free, easy, and frank affability that tends to popularity. Besides, he is no longer bashful—another element in his favor with capricious womanhood.

Notwithstanding her fears, doubts, and perplexities, Evelyn is intensely glad at the Senator's coming, for she has been frightened at the prolonged absence of the gentleman she fondly thought she held with a very tight rein and jaw-breaking Mexican bit.

This evening, as young Pythagoras, with bright brass buttons on his livery, and grinning eyes that gleam under the gaslights, ushers the guests into Mrs. Montessor's pretty parlor, there is no brighter or more vivacious lady in Washington than their fair hostess. For Evelyn is dressed *à merveille* in the creation of a New York dressmaker which rivals imported costume. In it she looks like a picture by Watteau, the gown being a charming, Frenchy, shepherdess affair, though

it is evidently intended for very warm weather, giving exquisite pneumonia effects as to ivory shoulders, arms, and bust.

Her manner and beauty are American, but her vivacity and *chic* are French; sometimes her conversation also, for she has discovered that her flowing Parisian is not only a convenience to her in addressing many of the foreigners in the capital, but also produces consideration from people who only speak the Anglo-Saxon tongue—some of them very badly.

One of the party is Mr. Raleigh, who has been in the Senate a few years, and of whom the country has reason to think very well.

Another is the Honorable Blatherskite Bostwick, Senator from the state of Miasma, who is a long-haired crazy populist. He means well—at least he thinks he means well—but he is so opposed to anybody being prosperous that he is even averse to giving his country a chance of happiness. Like many men of anarchistic proclivities he is a creature of fearful passions, amorous and otherwise. He prates of virtue, but a couple of young ladies in the Department offices could tell tales about him. He cries out that all men are equal, except himself; that every man is a scoundrel, except himself; and yet he loves gold so well that he is a silver man for purposes of reelection, and a buyer of Gelatine stock for purposes of speculation, though he denounces bankers every chance he gets in the United States Senate. Yet such is the wildness of the man he does not know he is a hypocrite and believes himself as pure a statesman as ever graced the senatorial toga.

In contradistinction to him is the Honorable Mr. Chippie, who is perfectly aware that the country has reason to think very badly of him—as it does; for Chippie is for Chippie, first, last, and all the time. Chippie's opinion of the relative importance of things political

in any crisis of the United States may always be put like this:



Mr. J. Jefferson Sloville, a member of the lower House, is a bustling Congressman. He is a hard worker on committees, and having plenty of money, doesn't care whether he is reelected; a kind of man who does his duty by his country without fear or favor. This gentleman is accompanied by his wife, a pleasant-looking lady, with mathematical manners and a tinge of common sense in her way of stating a proposition.

Miss Georgie Parsons, whose mother keeps a fashionable boarding house on F street, where Mr. and Mrs. Sloville live, is under their charge. She is a very

bright, dashing girl, with perchance too brilliant a tongue to suit some of the gentlemen of the company.

Miss Algeria Tolstock adds literary grace to the affair. Though very well gowned, there is a masculinity in her evening dress that gives hints of her being a new woman. She is a correspondent for several newspapers, but *surreptitiously*; were she known as a dragon of the press, Senators Chippie and Bostwick would fly from her presence as the devil would from holy water.

Monsieur and Madame de Merville also grace the drawing-room—at least, the lady does, she being a Frenchwoman of Parisian manners and breeding. As for De Merville himself, he would not grace anything, being an excited, dapper, flyaway little Frenchman, who has obtained a subordinate post at the French Legation.

Two bright, sparkling American girls make up the balance of the invited ladies; Miss Essie Stoddard, who is Northern and adores the army, and Miss Kittie Miffin, who is Southern and in love with the navy. They are here in Washington to have a good time, and they are having it—generally leaving their mothers behind. They are girls who go to every social affair, who are seen at ladies' teas, White House receptions and wherever they can get in. They add greatly to the charm and vivacity of life in the American capital and no *man* would keep them out, though perchance a good many of the ladies would, as they are apt to monopolize dashing officers and long mustachioed Legation attachés at "the Army and Navy germans" and other places where beauty and youth count more than age and official position.

To entertain them have been invited Jack Gorley, a lieutenant in the navy, who is great at the dance, and Monsieur de Giers of a foreign legation.

Señora de Oriva, with hawk's eyes and punctilious

Spanish etiquette, completes the gathering, which is somewhat conglomerate, but still is a pretty good one as Washington goes; and Mrs. Montessor has done very well with the three letters of introduction that Mr. Steinbergh has given her to the capital. She has increased her acquaintance, and has been seen in a number of Washington drawing-rooms, though she has not yet been asked to stand behind the line at the White House, and is not on visiting terms with the Cabinet clique.

The usual preliminary babble is rising from these ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Chippie, in an affable way peculiar to this great man, has taken under his wing, bright-tongued Miss Georgie Parsons, whose pretty shoulders he likes to look upon, and is remarking to her oracularly, rolling his eyes up to the bust of the the great statesman whose fixed, immovable, bronze expression seems to dominate the room: "Humph! Daniel Webster! A great man in his time, but hardly, my dear Miss Parsons, up to date."

"Oh, he isn't an up-to-date senator," giggles Miss Georgie.

"No. Nowadays we senators *pay* our bills." This remark is made in severe criticism of the prodigal and impecunious defunct.

"Yes, nowadays, you senators know *where* to get the money to pay them with," whispers Miss Parsons; at which Chippie grows suddenly red and confused and turns an evil eye on the girl's pretty shoulders.

But just here Mr. Guernsey is announced.

As the young senator makes his appearance a sly gleam flies into the eyes of Mr. Chippie, who is a wary old bird at love as well as at politics.

"Guernsey brings with him the sea breezes of Naragansett," he whispers significantly into his hostess's pretty ear as she goes forward to meet the new arrival.

A minute after dinner is announced, and Mr. Raleigh, the senior senator, offering his arm to the wife of the Congressman leads her into the dining room, where a feast made beautiful by floral decorations, brilliant china, dazzling cut glass, and washed down by generous wines awaits them, Evie as hostess bringing up the rear of the procession on Mr. Chippie's arm.

Guernsey has fallen into pleasant places, having as his partner vivacious Miss Parsons, and for his left-hand neighbor demure little Miss Mifflin, who has fallen to the lot of stalwart Jack Gorley. Nearly opposite them sits Algeria Tolstock, whose *décolleté* is a masculine one, looking more like a Yale boatman's sweater than anything else. Beside her is seated the Honorable Blatherskite Bostwick, who is not very well pleased at his location, as he likes pretty girls, and has upon his other hand the hawk-eyed Spanish duenna.

Mr. Sloville is taking care of Madame de Merville, and De Giers, the attaché, is trying to talk French to Essie Stoddard, who pretends to understand him, but doesn't.

However, they are all doing their best in a Tower-of-Babel way; for La Oriva is speaking Spanish to Madame de Merville, the attaché jabbering French, Katie Mifflin purring with a Southern accent, and Bostwick doing his best in Western vernacular, as the oysters disappear and the soup takes their place, these courses being silently, yet effectively, served by an old darkey flunkey, who acts as Evie's butler, and his assistant, an agile young waiter, gleaned from one of the hotels for the occasion.

"You have just taken your oath of office, haven't you?" remarks Miss Georgie enthusiastically to Guernsey. "How does it feel to be a brand-new United States Senator? I look at you and wonder, 'Does he feel too big for his boots?'"

"Young lady, you're a prophet!" sighs Guernsey, as he gives a wincing glance at his patent leathers that, being new and pointed, torture his feet beneath the mahogany.

"Do they hurt you very much?" queries Miss Vivacity laughingly. Then she whispers: "Hush! the Honorable Mr. Chippie is about to utter wisdom."

For that senator, having cleared his voice by a preliminary cough, turns his eyes upon the Congressman and remarks: "Sloville, I don't think I shall support the Gelatine schedule as sent up by the House. I may report an amendment upon it."

"Oho! Isn't there enough *jelly* in the bill?" giggles Miss Georgie; and though Chippie joins in the laugh he thinks savagely: "Sharp-witted little wretch, you go off Mrs. Chippie's visiting list on the double quick!" A thing that will break Miss Parsons's heart, for the girl is fighting the up-hill social fight of a boarding-house-keeper's daughter in Washington society.

But Georgie is not the only one who makes enemies this evening. Somebody chances to make a remark about the new woman, at which Evie laughingly cries:

"Ah, you mean our failures!"

"*Failures!*" says Miss Tolstock. "FAILURES!"

"Certainly," replies Mrs. Montessor, carelessly. "No woman ever wants to become a man until she has failed as a woman."

"Ah! very preety, very preety," remarks Monsieur de Merville. "We have no new women *en France* Zat ees impossible. Zey may dress for ze cycle, zey may dress for ze chase, but zey are still women all ze time."

"And what do you mean by women all the time?" says Algeria with an austere shrug of her masculine shoulders.

"All ze time ready to be made love to!—La! la!"

cries the Frenchman, who has grown enthusiastic with his champagne.

"But our new women don't get the chance," laughs Evie lightly.

"Don't they," cries Miss Tolstock savagely. "*Don't they?*—LOOK AT ME!" and gazing at her masculine muscles and powerful shoulders, an irrepressible giggle runs over the company. And Evie by her remark has made an enemy of Algeria Tolstock, who has a cowardly way of avenging herself by anonymous articles in the daily press.

Oh, bright tongues, how often do you cost your owners dear!

Then the babble runs away on other things—coming entertainments, coming politics—but always getting back to the great bill which is at present fermenting in the American Congress, and upon whose schedule of duties depends the value of Gelatine stock, Mr. Chippie and Mr. Raleigh both adroitly attempting to pump Guernsey upon his position on the bill, which has been passed by the House and sent up to the Senate. As the vote will be very close, they are exceedingly anxious to form an idea of the new man's position.

But the Honorable James, who has learned the habit, perchance from Indian traders, of keeping his mouth shut and letting the other man do the talking, simply replies: "I haven't formed an opinion on it yet. I will do my duty according to my lights when the time comes, though I would like a little information on the subject from others who are better posted."

"Oh, you'll get plenty of that," laughs Chippie, "Everybody is on one side or the other of the bill, but I should judge you are on the fence."

At this into Evie's mind flies joy and hope. Guernsey is on the fence—can she pull him over to her side

of it? For somehow or other into her mind has gradually come this day the thought that her Senator will be a difficult man to "boss" politically. He had, to use a Western expression, "lassed and run away with" their interview of the afternoon. She had not particularly wanted to be kissed, but he had kissed her; she had sturdily repelled being seated upon his knee, but she had sat there like a naughty little girl getting a scolding as long as he had told her to. She didn't think he had a right to question her about other gentlemen, especially Mr. Steinbergh, but she had told him all he asked. Against this, he had looked sympathetic when she had sighed that her Gelatine stock was going down—*down!*

Even as she chats across the table to him—she discovers, there is one way of "bossing" him, that is by appealing to his masculine strength, and appearing weak as the ivy that clings to the oak. Then hope becomes dominant as Mr. Chippie enters into a little dinner flirtation with her; for she notes the fire of jealousy in Guernsey's eyes.

"My pathos and *his* passion shall be my weapons!" thinks this pretty lady, as she glances over the white tablecloth made flowery by American beauty roses, and discovers that neither Georgie Parsons's bright face nor Katie Mifflin's glistening shoulders can gain from the gentleman more than passing regard; and the last is a beauty, and the first very pertly-tongued and very laughing-eyed.

So the dinner runs along until Evie, giving signal, rises and departs with her bevy of ladies into the parlor, leaving the gentlemen to their liquors, cigars, and masculine confidences; for the tongue of man flows very freely after dinner, and the convivial hour is as dangerous to mannish secrets as ladies' boudoirs are to feminine "never-tells."

The politicians have drawn their chairs round Raleigh, and are talking of the bill. The attaché, naval officer, and French *raconteur* are gossiping society *on dits* by themselves.

"You know, of course, the closing Gelatine quotation to-night?" remarks Sloville.

"No. It was strong at two o'clock. God bless my soul I have not read the evening paper!" ejaculates Chippie nervously.

"Any change in the stock market?" asks Bostwick anxiously.

"Only this, that within the last five minutes of the New York Stock Board, Gelatine broke three per cent."

"Great Heavens!" cries the Honorable Hugh J. Chippie turning pallid.

"My God! is it true?" mutters Bostwick, stifling an oath. Gazing at these two gentlemen, a slight smile goes over the Congressman's face, and he guesses that both are very long of Gelatine stock.

As for Guernsey, his brow lowers also, for he is thinking this will be a blow to their pretty hostess. Noting his appearance Sloville puts him down also as a speculator in that stock and thinks: "Thunder! This senator was bought before he ever took his seat!"

This news tends to break up the dinner party, for Chippie after a minute drops his cigar, which has now no flavor for him, and Bostwick snarlingly gets up and mutters he's got a telegram to send, which is the truth, as his means are as yet comparatively slender and a decided fall in Gelatine would be financial disaster to him.

As for Chippie he cannot *personally* send any telegram for he is prepared to swear that he has never bought or sold a share of the stock, and to do this has engaged the services of his valet who signs any orders his master may send to Wall Street brokers;

consequently Chippie is in a hurry to dictate to his body-servant.

Therefore very shortly the gentlemen stroll out of the dining-room to make the ladies once more happy by masculine attentions; Sloville, who is a man of grim humor, going out last and chuckling to himself: "If the fall in Gelatine had been known earlier, this would have been a very gloomy dinner party."

The social atmosphere of the drawing-room proves the truth of this, for Chippie's confident manner has become nervous, and his strident voice is now husky and subdued, and Bostwick's only remarks are snarls, even though Evie seats herself beside him and makes little Katie Mifflin give up the society of her sailor-man to bring serenity once more to the Senator's countenance by her pretty little feminine airs and graces.

A few moments after her guests are gone; all save Guernsey.

Walking up to him Evie says with decided voice: "You must go also. Don't stay a moment. Be sure and catch Chippie on Connecticut Avenue. Don't let them say you remained after the rest. Don't, for heaven's sake, let Miss Tolstock think you have the privilege of *lingering* here."

"I only stayed," remarks Guernsey, "to tell you bad news."

"Bad news!" Her cheeks grow pale.

"Your stock has fallen three per cent."

"Oh, that doesn't matter," she mutters. Then looking at him with appealing eyes and going into the ivy-and-oak business, she murmurs: "I have given up hope *now*. Kiss me and say good-night."

This is the first time she has ever proffered her lips to him. His other caresses have been seized from her by masterful masculine power. Guernsey's fourth kiss is therefore tenderer than any of the three before,

and it seems to soften her; and she clings round him and sighs: "My only hope is in you."

"Good God! is it as bad as that?"

"It is ruin, that's what it is—*ruin*—RUIN! But go away, run quick, catch Mr. Chippie. Don't get me talked about!"

At this, Guernsey making a plunge for his overcoat, rushes agilely from the hall, and with rapid strides overtakes his less vigorous *confrère* from Populoso. He also takes good care to be seen within five minutes in the parlor of the Arlington by Miss Algeria Tolstock, who lives at this hotel and generally takes a late supper even after a dinner party.

But all the while Guernsey is thinking: "If I could vote for the schedule of the gelatine duties! I will hunt up statistics and see the truth of this matter."

Which he does and finds to his astonishment that gelatine is cheaper under the Trust than it has ever been before, *much cheaper*; that people can indulge in gelatine more liberally at less cost than they could before the Trust had put its "vulture claws"—as he remembers having read in one of the Western newspapers—upon the throat of the American public.

"Pray God," he mutters, "it may be my duty to vote for the Gelatine schedule," and goes to bed, to dream not of politics but of the clinging arms and kissing lips of Evie Montessor.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRAYERS TO THE DEVIL.

But other gentlemen toss on uneasy pillows this evening.

The Honorables Hugh J. Chippie and Blatherskite Bostwick are not making a comfortable night of it. Both, on the suggestions of the wily Steinbergh, have gone heavily long on Gelatine stock, and this sudden fall in their security has made Chippie angry and Bostwick frightened. Chippie has plenty of money already, and is an expert speculator himself; but for all that the diminishment of his investment, even on the ticker, does not give him pleasure.

As for Blatherskite Bostwick, until he became a senator and ready to barter his vote he had never had the opportunity of speculating. Thrown into power by one of those hysterical Populist waves out West, that come as vigorously and as unexpectedly and do as much damage as prairie cyclones and blizzards, Mr. Bostwick had never before had the chance of playing for a great financial stake. He has put all the money he can command on light margin into Gelatine, thinking it is very low, as in truth it is—the stock having already declined thirty per cent.—and intending by his vote on gelatine duties to lift it up again. Therefore this sudden fall in his security frightens the gentleman, for a still further decline means a call for additional margins by his brokers, and, failing that, the sale of his securities. He is in the same predicament as half a dozen of his brother senators, and Mr. Steinbergh having got them *in*, is now shrewdly putting the screws on them to make them work to get themselves *out* by

passing a satisfactory tariff enactment in regard to gelatine that will make the stock boom and soar into the financial empyrean above par.

At present the man who holds Gelatine in his hand is engaged in the occupation so pleasant to the magnates of great trusts, of "sawing out longs" and "milking the street"; consequently the fluctuations of the stock are both erratic and violent in the extreme; at times the security seeming buoyant as a balloon, and at others falling with a rapidity that makes its unfortunate holders think it is going straight to Tophet, and if they don't sell in a flash they will go to financial perdition with it. Already a wail has gone up from the widows and orphans who are holders of it for investment.

Now this kind of manipulation is a process with which Mr. Chippie has sometimes indulged himself in railroad securities that he controls, and though it makes him angry, it doesn't worry him to the extent it does Mr. Bostwick, who thinks he sees bankruptcy staring him in the face, yet knows he will never dare to shriek out his plaint, for these gentlemen of the Senate have all declared on their honor, both publicly and privately, that not one of them has bought or sold a share of Gelatine stock, and are prepared by oath, if necessary, to support it if a Senate Committee is appointed to investigate; and most of the brokers they have employed are prepared to swear with them.

Therefore, though to-night Mr. Steinbergh, the great Gelatine Trust magnate rests very easily on his downy couch in his magnificent apartments in New York, Mr. Chippie's slumber is uneasy and restless, and the Honorable Blatherskite Bostwick doesn't know what sleep means as he tosses on the pillow of the despairing speculator throughout the unending night, and rises to

senatorial duties in the morning, hating Wall Street worse than ever but resolved for very self-preservation to fight the Gelatine battle with all his pigmy soul.

These two statesmen's breakfasts would probably be more unpalatable to them than they are—likewise that of the Honorable James B. Guernsey—could they but read a little scented note that has been despatched by midnight mail and has arrived in New York just about this time, and is being read by the gentleman who is the author of their miseries. It is as follows:

DEAR MR. STEINBERGH: You have asked me to keep you *au courant* with Washington events, especially society ones; as you suggested that social straws often show how the political feather flies. I have been giving a little series of dinner parties as you advised. One of them took place last night and was quite a success I can tell you. Four senators and one congressman honored but hardly graced my table. What do you think of that? The Honorable and aristocratic Hugh J. Chippie, the populistic Blatherskite Bostwick, and the staid and solemn Wilton Raleigh; likewise the Honorable Doc Guernsey, of Populoso, who has at last turned up from the West. I feared he would never come. Mr. Sloville, of the House was also present.

I don't think you can count on Mr. Raleigh to vote for the Gelatine schedule of duties, though he states he is reading up statistics on it. As for Bostwick and Chippie you have got them *now*! My butler informs me that both winced when they learnt Gelatine stock had gone down.

I think I am now in a position to accept your very generous offer. Place the stock to my account and I will *deliver the goods*.

Very gratefully and sincerely,

EVELYN MONTRESSOR.

P.S.—Social life is awfully expensive here. Of course the fifteen thousand dollars I made in stocks seems a large sum to a *poor* man like you, but to a *rich* woman as I am it is *nothing*! It is now *really, truly* NOTHING! Place the stock to my account as soon as possible and then make it go up high, dear, good Mr. Steinbergh, make it go up high. E.

To this she receives in the course of the next day the following characteristic reply:

MY DEAR MRS. MONTRESSOR: I bless you, astute little soul, and thank you for the information that Chippie and Bostwick both *winned* when the stock went down.

You will receive from Messrs. Castillio & Co. a statement that you have purchased five thousand shares of Gelatine common, at to-day's market rates. Then do your best to make the stock rise, for if you don't you may wince like Chippie and Bostwick. Heaven helps those who help themselves!

Yours fraternally,

S.

This makes the fair widow's faculties very keen and she notes Steinbergh's whip is doing its work very well upon the statesmen in Washington, who are long of Gelatine, a number of members of both Houses being in the same predicament as Chippie and Bostwick; and within the next few days this coterie of speculating politicians by their influence succeed in getting the proper amendment to the Gelatine duties made in the Senate Committee to the bill that has been sent up to it from the Lower House.

Then come two questions:

First, whether this amendment will pass the Senate!

Second, if it does pass the Senate, can the Senate ram it down the throat of the House?

For the House, coming directly from the people, has more of the people's honesty within it, it being more difficult to bribe the general public, than it is to debauch a few members of a State Legislature in the various manners usual to senatorial contests, *i. e.*, promises of office, promises of influence, and last and not least, cash down.

But the vote in the Senate is apparently going to be very close upon this Gelatine schedule of duties, and Mr. Steinbergh in his philanthropic way gives his co-adjutors who are pressing the bill, he thinks, rather too indolently, another little reminder as to what will happen to them in case it doesn't go through. Gelatine stock makes another break of about two points in less

than two minutes in the New York Stock Exchange. This news brings the perspiration of agony upon some of their brows, especially Bostwick's; who curses Wall Street, but works all the harder under its lash—fearing he will be sold out.

In this he is a fool. Mr. Steinbergh does not wish to sell him out, then he would surely vote against the Gelatine duties. He merely wants to frighten his friends in the Senate and make them work like beavers, to give him the duties he wants.

But while the magnate of the Gelatine Trust is squeezing the patriotic statesmen of the Senate, he is also squeezing the pocket of his fair coadjutor, Evelyn Montessor. And this is reflected in her manner to Mr. Guernsey.

In her anguish she has cried to herself, "I will have his vote. I *must* have his vote!" and has voiced this extraordinary proposition from woman's logic! "It would be dishonorable, for me not to gain his vote; I have promised it!"

To this task she has set herself with all her feminine tact, all her vivacious beauty; bringing every charm of manner, every tenderness of mien, so as to win Jim Guernsey's heart and make it her very own, even to the extent, that for her he may sacrifice, if need be, the respect of men, to do her bidding in the halls of the United States Senate.

She does not dare to essay this openly, one or two hints on the subject not having been received encouragingly. One afternoon she has said to him—for he has now got into the habit of dropping into her pretty flat at odd times: "Now, J—Jim—" (Heavens! how alluring she makes the "J—Jim!") "Now J—Jim, you'll do one thing for me, won't you?"

"You bet!" cries the enchanted Guernsey, forgetting diction in his rapture.

"Then when the vote comes in the Senate upon which my little fortune depends——"

"I'll do what I think is square," interjects the Senator. "I thought you meant a personal service. That is yours to command, Sis. But in my political life I don't want a woman boss." Then he gazes at the bust of Daniel Webster and mutters: "Great Scott! what would that patriot have said to a *woman* boss!"

"He'd—he'd have *loved* a dozen of them," laughs Mrs. Montessor.

"Humph! I believe Daniel did love the ladies," assents the Senator grimly; then goes on sternly: "But there's no record he ever elected one of them his political boss. And look here, little girl—" his tone is very solemn now—"if you want me to love you as you ought to be loved, you'll not mention this matter again to me. You wring my heart strings by your appeals. But Jim Guernsey has taken his oath of office and every time he votes he remembers it. Quit talking of politics that you don't understand and play me the 'Whistling Coon.' You sing as well as if you had been a professional."

This request Mrs. Montessor has deemed it best to comply with, and very docilely has sung this touching negro melody with such dainty pathos and such exquisite voice, that Guernsey has cried in admiration: "Thunder, Evie! You ought to go on the stage!"

And she has astonished and horrified him by sighing: "That's where I shall have to go, if Gelatine sinks much lower!"

But here he astounds her, for he says authoritatively: "The stage? I shall not permit it! Suppose I will have the eyes of a thousand theatre-goers gazing at you every night? No, Miss, not this trip, by the scalp of Sitting Bull!"

This style of talk, which he has indulged in several

times lately, makes Evelyn gaze at Mr. James Guernsey with a kind of horror in her eyes. "He seems to believe that I belong to him," she thinks, patting the carpet nervously with her little foot. "Perchance he wishes me to become a pauper, so that I will be entirely in his power." Then she clenches her exquisite fist savagely, and cogitates: "You infamous villain, just like your father! Thank God, I am a helpless child no more!" and would gaze upon her mentor with evil eye, did she but dare.

Another incident that takes place soon afterward, and which she resents, makes her think she hates him even more.

Guernsey, lounging, after his easy manner, into Mrs. Montessor's parlor, for he now with Western breeziness apparently thinks he owns the flat, chances to put his eyes upon a dispatch lying ready for district telegraph boy, and noting it is addressed to Augustus Steinbergh his gaze becomes stern, his manner preoccupied; he does not even greet the lady he has come to see as she sits, alluring to look upon, in unconventional but coquettish teagown.

Evie murmurs to him: "You haven't kissed me, Jim!" For by this time the widow has made up her mind to play for her Senator's heart strings, not for his judgment.

This he does not answer directly but says quite sternly: "You send a telegram to Mr. Steinbergh? You know I don't care about your communicating with him."

"Not even to save the little that is left me?" she murmurs, then cries almost savagely: "You didn't want me to see him. I have not seen him—to my financial ruin, perhaps—I have not seen him! And now you object to a telegram."

For one moment Evie's eyes blaze at her self-consti-

tuted tyrant, but forcing herself to play her role, she suddenly tears open the envelope that contains the dispatch, holds it before Guernsey's eyes and sobs : "Read it, if that will please you, read it !"

Then Guernsey sees to his dismay the following despairing communication :

If my brokers call on me for more margins I cannot respond, I am ruined. Please, if the stock goes up a little bit, sell all I have and save me from penury. E. M.

From this her tyrant turns eyes of sympathy and admiration upon his enchantress, who now sits a picture of drooping loveliness before him. Perchance his gaze might have *more* admiration and *less* sympathy did he guess that this dispatch has been placed upon the table for his jealous glance to fall upon it, so that he may make the very demand he has made, and read the message that has been written not for the financier's eyes, but for his.

Suddenly the Western senator astounds her and makes her for one instant ashamed. He whispers to her : "Cheer up, little girl ! I'll make your stock go up. *I can do it by ten words !*"

"What are those ?"

"One sentence spoken in the United States Senate this afternoon. They think that upon my vote depends the success or failure of the Gelatine schedule. I understand Raleigh will to-day state that statistics show that since the formation of the Trust, gelatine has become cheaper to the inhabitants of the United States."

"And you ?" falters Evelyn, her eyes flaming with sudden hope.

"I ? I shall say I have also examined the statistics and I find that the Senator from Kalamazah *is correct !*" That'll make Wall street think I am going to vote for the Gelatine schedule," remarks Guernsey

grimly. "It is very sensitive to the words of Senators at this moment."

"God bless you!" she mutters faintly.

"I'm not too sure that God will bless me or Wall Street either ultimately," chuckles the statesman, "but if you bless me, kiss your Jimmie." Which she does.

Then Guernsey speaks again. "I'll send the telegram to Steinbergh ordering him to sell your stock. I would prefer that you did not communicate with him directly."

"You—you don't like Mr. Steinbergh?"

"I don't dislike him. He's a very pleasant companion, too pleasant a fellow," he says grimly, "to have galavanting about my inclosure."

With these enigmatical words Guernsey goes away, but does this afternoon in the halls of the Senate what he has promised, and, his words being flashed over the country, Wall Street thinks the Gelatine schedule sure of passing. So does Steinbergh, and up it goes half a dozen points.

For this, the ensuing day the Senator receives such pretty thanks from bright eyes and sweet lips that it puts him in the seventh heaven of amorous delight.

He says to Evie: "Now, I'll telegraph to sell your stock, little woman. Don't communicate with Mr. Steinbergh."

This he does this very night. But he does not guess that another telegram has been sent to the financier by the lady for whom he is acting, telling him to pay no attention to any communications signed "Guernsey," but to hold all telegrams received with that signature very carefully—for further us.

On receiving Steinbergh's answer to her communication Evelyn thinks grimly: "My Senator has put into my hands the weapon with which to ruin him in the

sight of his fellow men. From now on he may swear that he has had no transactions in Gelatine, but I hold the dispatch that will prove Jim Guernsey, United States Senator from Populoso, has dealt in at least five thousand shares of that stock. By his speech he has made Gelatine go up; then he has sold it!" And she clenches her little fist, and cries to herself: "I'll ruin him! He would make me absolutely dependent upon him—for WHAT? To prey upon my helplessness! His infamous father stole my birthright. This villain-son would steal from me my right to look other women in the face. He cannot mean anything else, *he has the Guernsey blood*, hypocrite, scoundrel! Oh! how I hate him!—*hate him!*—HATE HIM!" seeming to take a hysterical pleasure in these words that she has very often said to herself in the last few days.

A moment after she sneers: "He has done this little thing for me for jealousy of Steinbergh," then utters this unholy petition: "O Father of lies! If I can make him supremely jealous! The moment I make him that—I WIN!"

And as if His Satanic Majesty had been listening to her prayer—for the devil generally puts a trump card into a lady's hand at the proper moment in such a game as this—this very evening into Washington, with flaming posters and big head lines in the newspapers, comes the Lucile Jervaise Opera Company, bearing as its second tenor, under the stage name of Claude Auchester, the ex-husband of the lady who would play with the heart of the Hon. James B. Guernsey, Senator from Populoso.

To add to the ingredients of this strange *mélange* there also journeys a day or two after into the capital Gonzalo de Oriva, who has been called to this place by a letter from his mother that has contained the following lines, which fire the Spanish blood:

I fear Señora Montessor is being persecuted by the love of Señor Guernsey, the mighty *Senador* from the *Occidente*. Since he has arrived thy beautiful darling has grown pale, nervous, trembling, and has said many prayers to the devil.

On reading this the Spaniard has ground his white teeth and muttered: "*Caramba!* I will eat his heart! *Vamos Gonzalo!*"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SECOND TENOR MAKES A HIT.

INTO this affair there also comes a malicious, wreck and ruin, feminine hate.

Algeria Tolstock having chosen to consider Evelyn Montessor's words about the new woman at the dinner party as personal sneers against herself, is prepared to avenge them by a number of arts—most of which are not manly.

This lady would probably have hated—in fact did hate—the fair widow from the moment Evie's charming personality brought envy to the lone spinster's heart. She hates Evelyn for her beauty, which Miss Tolstock has not; likewise because of her prosperity; for every time Algeria sees Mrs. Montessor's dashing equipage with prancing horses and natty coachman fly past her, as she tramps the wintry streets of Washington, she grinds one part of her soul against the other.

What Algeria hates she chastises! She says to herself: "This siren has meshed in her artful net the innocent, simple-minded statesman from the West. It shall be my *duty* to save him!"

In this pursuit she has placed herself at various times in mannish and alluring fashion in the presence of this gentleman she would protect, in hotel corridors, the parlors of the Arlington, and other localities where she can conveniently get at him.

But to her free and easy, "How are you, Jim?" or "Could you give me a card to ladies' gallery, Senator," as well as soft glances of her coquettish masculine eyes, Guernsey has paid little heed.

This has angered her, and she has muttered: "I will be revenged on both of them. He wants to be a villain; I shall not stop him, but I will make it apparent to the world. The light of the press shall illumine the intrigues of this Delilah, who is shearing the head of the Samson from the West. With my pen dipped in venom will I stab them both."

Materials are not lacking for the article she proposes. Washington has already put its eyes upon the beautiful widow, and said slyly to itself: "Jim Guernsey is a lucky fellow; he's got the prettiest girl in the capital!" Several interviews this self-appointed guardian of virtue has with Pythagoras—in which she deftly pumps Evie's darkey page by means of the pervading dollar system, which in Washington goes up in increasing volume from the waiters at Chamberlin's to the Senate chamber itself—procures spicy reports of certain tender passages that have occurred between the Senator and the lady upon whom he lavishes his attentions.

"Clar to goodness," remarks Pythagoras; "clar to goodness, yo should see 'em, Missie Tall Stalks. Dey just hangs on each oder's lips like bull purps fightin'. But don't you gibe me away. I wouldn't tell yo dis ef it wasn't fo' the Senator callin' me a black-skinned imp, 'cause I burned his rubber galloshoes heatin' 'em in de hall furnace!"

From these revelations of the page and words that have come to her from one or two visitors at Saratoga and Narragansett during the preceding summer, grouped together in a mind of massive grasp for scandal in general and feminine depravity in particular, this lady of anonymous newspaper correspondence has produced an article which she has sent with ghoulish glee to the editor of the *Silveropolis Buzzard*! a journal which is at present devoting itself to attacking first, foremost and all the time the Honorable James B.

Guernsey, Senator from Populoso, who will not vote for pensioning the sister of the editor of said paper as the widow of a veteran, this lady having—while still in short skirts, five years after the war had ended—married a decrepit recruiting sergeant on his death-bed with a view to the aforesaid pension. This emolument having been complacently reckoned up by the editor of the paper as one of his family's goods, chattels, and endowments, the non-receipt of it makes him think the American Congress the home of devils.

In addition to this, for the last two or three weeks, Miss Algeria has been stabbing Evelyn beneath the clavicle by anonymous letters that she has sent to the devoted Guernsey hinting that Evie is not a widow, suggesting that she may have never been a wife, and insinuating that a few pertinent questions, if answered truthfully by Augustus Steinbergh of the New York Gelatine Trust, might open the eyes of the guileless Western statesman.

It is these letters that have made Guernsey so determinedly jealous of Steinbergh. But he has said no word of them to the lady accused, thinking to himself: "I won't shame her by asking her to answer anonymous communications. But if I can put my hands on the living author of these letters, by the eternal, the chap shall stand face to face with the woman he has maligned," for Miss Algeria's communications have been made by typewriter, which has been invented by the devil for disguising handwriting, and Guernsey thinks they come from man, not woman.

It is with these disturbing ideas in his head that one evening the Honorable James B. Guernsey takes his place in a stage box at the National Theatre, very proud to have by his side the woman he thinks the handsomest in Washington.

The performance is one of Offenbach's master-

pieces, the music of which has been emasculated by the additions and alterations of an American orchestral leader who has, with that audacious vanity peculiar to small minds, imagined he could improve the rhythms that set the world dancing, and the melodies that made the world whistle. Dead genius should be left alone by those who cannot themselves originate.

The audience is large as well as fashionable, and the piece being very handsomely staged and voluptuously embellished by a number of very pretty girls in the chorus, the performance delights and amuses Mr. Guernsey, who has not yet become *blasé* with the elaborate *mise-en-scène*, gorgeous costuming and generous mounting of the Eastern theatres.

Mrs. Montessor, sitting in the front of the box which looks almost directly on the stage, enjoys it also. It at least serves to divert her thoughts from the subject on which they have dwelt so intently for many weeks, and which now is approaching its crisis; for all the time she is asking herself this question: "Will I be able to deliver 'the goods'?"

Therefore she is very complaisant, charming, and flattering to "the goods" as they sit a little in front of her, for Guernsey having grown eager, is leaning out over the stage applauding the efforts of the chorus who are composed of very pretty feminine soldiers and a mixture of loutish German peasants—together with the witcheries of Wanda and the buffooneries of the baritone comedian as General Boom.

In truth, they both enjoy the performance very well until the entry of the effeminate Prince Paul, the degenerate scion of an effete German principality. This la-de-da creature is played by a big, hulking fellow, whose blond hair is concealed by an elaborate wig and his features ornamented by a long, thoroughly waxed mustache.

On his entrance the princeling's face has been turned from Evelyn, and his tone has been affected; but, as he breaks out into the air entitled "The Gazette of Holland," his singing voice, especially his manner of always giving his high notes *flat*, strikes Mrs. Montessor with a presage of impending doom. Then, as he crosses to left center and turns his face in sickly smile upon the audience, hoping to catch its admiration, his eyes meet those of the lady in the first stage box, who gazes at him as if he were a basilisk. Her face grows white as the marble column behind it; her gloved hand, which has been carelessly extended beyond the rail of her box, grasping a programme she has not read, becomes as paralyzed, and from its feeble fingers the playbill escapes and drops upon the stage.

This calls Guernsey's attention to her. He turns, and, seeing her face, mutters, in alarm: "Good Heavens, you are ill!"

"Not—not at all," falters Evelyn.

"By Jove, you must be ill—you're white as snow by moonlight."

"The calcium light was accidentally thrown upon me. I'm all right," she murmurs; then, for she has a strong soul in her fair body, attempting playfulness, she laughs; "Perhaps, however, Prince Paul's atrocious phrasing and fearful flatting gave me a shudder," next mutters: "You know my musical ear is very delicate."

"Yes, I know you have the prettiest ears on earth," whispers the enraptured Senator, "and you sing like a prima donna, or better." To this he adds, grimly: "You had better stick cotton-wool in your ears now! Great Scott! the second tenor is singing worse than ever!"

This is true, as Prince Paul, in his next verse,

seems to have gone astray entirely, both as regards notes and lyrics. But it rather adds to his performance of the stupid German Prince in the eyes of the audience, who imagine his personal stupidity the assumed embarrassment of the dudish princeling, and Claude Auchester receives more applause for this than he has ever obtained since he joined the Lucile Jervaise Opera Company—so much that the comedian, who essays General Boom, claps him on the shoulder at their exit, and says:

“By donkeys ! you’ve made a hit, old man, not only with the audience but with that corking woman in the stage box !”

“Yes, I’ve made a hit with her before,” mutters Claude, who cannot restrain his self-glorification, for Evie, as she sits in her box that night, is a dream of beauty; desperation and embarrassment adding a new, yet lovely light to her eyes and a nervous intensity to each pose or gesture, giving to her almost that strange yet weird fascination of hypnotic trance.

“Ah, you know her, you break-heart Lothario with the lion’s hair and the rat’s voice ?” chuckles the comedian.

“I should think so, you comedian of rat’s face and lion’s voice,” returns the second tenor savagely. “She’s my wife !”

“Your wife ? Great jingo !” stutters General Boom, then he whispers jocularly: “Number one, two, or three ?” and goes away very full of his news. This soon gets bruited about among the company from chorus to prima donna; the consequence being that all upon the stage turn their gaze upon the lady in the Honorable James B. Guernsey’s box; the chorus sings at her, the prima donna acts at her, and the first tenor, leaving the center of the stage, sighs his love notes almost in to her ear; the conspirators dance

at her, and finally, during the ball-room scene in the second act, the calcium man behind the scenes, wanting to get a good view of her, turns his limelight upon her; and, inspired by the Thespian desire of showing off and "mashing," the company give the best performance they have ever rendered of *La Grande Duchesse*, in honor of Claude Auchester's beautiful spouse.

All enjoy it except the ex-husband and the ex-wife. Guernsey smiles complacently and whispers: "By scalp-locks! Evie, your beauty has made a hit on the stage as well as with the audience. See that infernal first tenor make eyes at you!"

"Pshaw! it's an ovation to you," laughs Mrs. Montessor forcing herself to lightness. "Do you notice how that pretty chorus-girl at the end of the quadrille—the one in the green brocade court dress—is ogling you?"

"Oh! the one with the lace stockings?" remarks the statesman, complacently.

"Yes, you are right about the hosiery," giggles Evie, half hysterically, for just at this moment Prince Paul has given her a most love-sick glance. Then she murmurs, archly: "I suppose you'll want to take me home before the end of the performance so you can be at the stage entrance with the dude clerks of the Treasury Department?"

"Why, Sis, I haven't been on a spree since I came to Washington," mutters Guernsey, in wounded tone. To this he adds complacently: "That's doing pretty well, isn't it?"

"Yes, for a senator," murmurs Evelyn, as she fights her battle against embarrassment, which is not helped by the statesman suddenly whispering savagely: "It's remarkably curious the way the second tenor scowls at me every chance he gets."

This is true, as the comedian has playfully put Claude Auchester in paroxysms of rage by remarking: "My dear boy, you're left! Don't you see the big man—big gun he must be, senator or head of a department, or some other government swell? He's sweeter on your wife than if she were corn juice. Why don't you tackle him and get a backer? Many a fellow has gone starrng on less!"

This kind of insinuation does not make Evie's ex-husband feel kindly to the big man in dress suit and ample white waistcoat who is applauding vigorously at every point, and his rage is augmented by the prima donna, who is a vivacious little wag in her way, whispering to him in wicked archness as they dance in the second act: "Does he pay you alimony?"

So all this evening Claude, whenever the stage business will permit him, regards Guernsey with malevolent glances, and Evelyn with appealing ones, that make her sick at heart, for she knows they mean further appeals to her purse, if not to her affections, and perchance some horrible *faux pas* that may embarrass if not destroy her chances of James B. Guernsey's vote in the Senate.

But Claude's glances are as nothing to the fitful flashes that come from a pair of dark eyes in the orchestra, the eyes of Gonzalo, the Spaniard, who notes the pallor of his lady-love in the box, and attributing it to her disgust at the attentions and persecutions of the great Western senator mutters to himself: "*Diablo! Querida mia* is sighing for me. She has discovered that she loves *me*! She is dying slowly beneath that *ladron's* nauseous endearments. *Santos!* but I am the man to stop it!"

So Evie sits gazing on the merry opera, its jokes as naught to her, its music a babel of sound; in her mind one idea—how can she get out of the theatre before

Claude intrudes himself upon her to force her to an explanation with Guernsey that may be fatal to her project. She knows that no diffidence or modesty will keep her ex-husband from intruding upon her: that it will be a race for her to escape from the theater before he can get to her side.

She does not dare to hurry her escort away before the curtain falls, fearing it will produce comment; but even as the green baize descends she lays entreating hand upon the Senator's black coat-sleeve and murmurs: "Take me to supper, quick!"

"You're hungry, little woman?" he questions.

"Yes, and thirsty!"

In this she tells the truth, for her throat is burning with feverish dismay, her voice is husky with anxiety.

Thus adjured, Guernsey remarks complacently: "So am I!" Then, being a quick man with clothes, he slips on his overcoat, and, taking Mrs. Montessor on his arm elbows his way through the crowd with Western promptness and modern disregard of other people's toes; and their carriage being brought hurriedly up, they make a rapid drive to Mr. Chamberlin's celebrated restaurant on McPherson Square.

There the lady eats but little, though she drinks her champagne in a feverish way, appearing distraught and absent-minded—so much so that the Senator observes in anxious voice: "You don't seem to be up to your usual high level, girly-gurly! Too much society?"

"Not at all," she replies, "too much anxiety."

"Oh, don't worry about that bill," he says, cheerily.

"It'll be all right, anyway."

To this she murmurs: "If you say so, it must be all right," and is very kind to him as he takes her home, permitting him one kiss in the carriage and an extra *bonne bouche* as he bids her good night.

As for Guernsey, he is in high spirits, so much so

that this lady, who imagines she has got to reading her man quite well, remarks: "What makes you so happy?"

"Well, I don't suppose its right to be elated at other people's misfortunes," replies the statesman, "but I've just received a telegram that the *Silveropolis Buzzard* has been busted in business and seized by the sheriff; and as that journal has been giving me particular fits for the last few weeks, it has not made me cry. Besides, this miserable revenue bill comes up for vote to-morrow night. It's a thing that has bothered everybody, and me in particular, and with that off my mind, I'll take time to attend to a little private love affair of mine."

With these curious words on his lips he goes reluctantly away, favoring Evelyn with a look that makes her, from the roots of her golden hair to her ivory neck, one living blush.

His words have set her brain at work, and, as his steps die away, she thinks: "That means that villain will expect his answer soon"; then sneers: "He's a rather slow man for a *senator*—hasn't been on a spree since he came to Washington!" Next mutters, with blazing eyes: "Does he mean his first spree shall be with me? Wait till I have your vote, you dastard! Then, if you speak of love to me, I will destroy you!"

A minute after she shudders: "It is only a day more. If I can keep Claude from bringing destruction on me I shall win. But he is certain to discover my address, certain to come walking in upon me, perchance to my undoing, to-morrow. It all hangs on twenty-four hours!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

IF I SAY "AYE," WILL YOU SAY AYE?

IN this she is perfectly right. Claude is already on her track. As soon as he has been able to wash off his make-up and get into the clothes of every-day life he has rushed to the front of the theater, but finding that the audience have all drifted away has muttered mournfully to himself: "Yes, I can trust her never to come to the theater this week," then whines: "What if she's only a transient in town—if I can't find her to demand another fifty? She should pay me alimony or he should pay me alimony, somebody should pay me alimony! Rolling in wealth and I *working!*"

But the next day, putting his wits in action, Mr. Montessor goes down to the theatre early and inquires at the box-office who held stage box A the preceding night, and is informed by the treasurer that he thinks it was the Honorable James B. Guernsey. "Whoever it was, he had a stunning woman on his arm when he came in," remarks the box-office official.

"In pale green, with a white opera bonnet and pink roses?" queries Claude, eagerly.

"Yes, I reckon you're about right," replies the treasurer, "but I have'nt the eye for feminine toilettes that you chaps on the stage have. To me, she looked green and golden and shining."

But the description is near enough for the second tenor, and the whereabouts of the Honorable James B. Guernsey are very easy to discover. He soon finds that the latter's address is Chamberlin's, and murmurs to himself: "I'll tackle him first, he'll bleed easier. I won't be robbed of my wife for nothing."

But though Guernsey's address is easy to discover, the statesman himself is not easily located. He is a very busy man and has spent all his time in a Senate Committee room where refreshments are sent in to him from the Congressional restaurant. So Claude is compelled to content himself with loitering in the vicinity of Mr. Chamberlin's hostelry and would undoubtedly encounter the Senator when he returned to dinner in the evening did not a lady sitting in the restaurant and waiting anxiously to see that same gentleman, chance to put eyes upon the second tenor as he lounges about.

"Why is Claude here?" she thinks with a shudder. "Good Heavens! can it be to meet Mr. Guernsey?" And knowing this must be stopped at any cost, and being a woman who meets emergencies very promptly and scientifically, Evelyn steps out to the Thespian and lifting her veil remarks: "Mr. Montessor, I believe?"

"By Jove, Evie, I have been looking for you everywhere. I came here to see——"

"Not me!" she returns coldly, "I don't live here," then adds sternly: "You are at his hotel to see the gentleman that was with me at the theatre last evening," next remarks menacingly: "If you approach him in any way you shall suffer for it—in *your pocket!*"

"How dare you threaten me in such a way?" whispers Claude, then goes on reproachfully: "I who would have shared your last crust with you."

"Yes, *my* last crust; that's what you want to share now. But if you wish to get some of my bread and butter, and perchance some of my cake, you'll listen to my words—not here, but at my house. Call on me at seven o'clock this evening. Then I will speak to you. This interview cannot be continued further

nere, but remember no word to this gentleman you have called to see in my behalf," she sneers. "At seven o'clock—do you promise? Here is my address."

Thus commanded, Mr. Montessor gives the necessary assurance and goes away shrewdly cogitating: "If she doesn't treat me properly I can always go to him afterwards."

From this interview Evelyn is driving away shuddering: "That was a narrow chance!" Then she murmurs as if astounded: "And I never thought Claude had brains enough for that!"

A moment later she thinks, analyzing the affair: "I have given him the right hour. At seven Mr. Guernsey will be dining. I can finish with Claude in thirty minutes. Then I shall be free to gain Guernsey's vote. It's my last chance for it! I must have it.. For my interview with my statesman I must have the arts and beauty of even a Cleopatra."

Therefore arriving at her flat, she pens a few hasty words to the Senator asking him to kindly visit her after his dinner and before he goes to the Senate—about half-past eight o'clock.

This being finished, at 5 P. M. she takes a light dinner—for she wishes her brain to be as bright and vivacious as electricity itself, and her command of herself, in thought, in word, even in sentiment and passion, to be as complete as a fencer should have over nerves and muscles when engaged in a duel to the death.

Her duenna, Evie is delighted to learn, has an engagement that will occupy her at some embassy entertainment until late in the night. Señora de Oriva is going with some Spanish friends. Mrs. Montessor hurries her off to them, and from now on devotes herself to making a toilette that shall charm the very senses out of the law-maker.

Thus being prepared to enchant and allure man, she

makes a superb picture in her little parlor, awaiting the coming of Mr. Montessor.

With her ex-husband she will have a monetary affair; it will probably last about ten minutes. She is confident Claude must be there sharp at the hour named, for he performs this evening. But in this she is mistaken. The Lucile Jervaise Company plays another piece in its repertoire this night, and Mr. Montessor, as second tenor, is only cast for a minor rôle in the third act. Consequently, as actors almost invariably are behind time in any appointment of their lives, this gentleman does *not* come at seven.

She glances again and again at the ormolu clock as it ticks on her onyx {mantelpiece, and mutters anxiously: "What detains him? If he does not come until Mr. Guernsey!" and mocks herself, murmuring: "Fool! Did Claude ever come on time to *any* appointment? Why he was even late at our wedding. Dolt that I was not to place more time between these interviews," and nervously plucks at the lace thing she calls a handkerchief lying in her lap.

But just here she starts with sudden joy; there is a ring at the front door.

No card is brought to her, for she has instructed Pythagoras to immediately admit the gentleman. So rising to receive Claude Montessor and give him his *congé* and a check as quickly as possible, Evie suddenly emits a little startled cry as, instead of her ex-husband, comes in to her with flaming eyes and crazy Spanish manner, Gonzalo de Oriva, who is here to rescue her from the endearments of the *Senador* from the *Occidente*.

He is in full evening dress with perfumed hair and waxed mustachios for the enchanting of his lady-love; but he stares astonished, for even in his dreams Evelyn Montessor had never seemed so beautiful, as she stands

beneath the soft lamplight in an evening toilet that makes her seem a fairy in lithe grace and airy pose, though her exquisite form is rounded and adorned with every contour that gives loveliness to woman—ivory shoulders, polished arms, fair neck and rounded bust, gleaming and dazzling; one little foot in Cinderella slipper and silken webbed hosiery advanced to meet him.

Even as he gazes Gonzalo gives a cry of Spanish love and with the mad impetuosity of the Latin murmurs, "*Querida mia!*" His eyes blaze as they devour her loveliness, and throwing himself prostrate at her feet and embracing her knees he murmurs hoarsely, "At last!"

To this wild attack she gives answer in a little scream, and for a second is overcome with astonishment and consternation. The next, sweeping her laces and satins from his grasp, she stands coldly over him, and, gazing haughtily in his upturned, pleading, dark eyes, sneers: "What brings you here? I thought, Señor de Oriva, you were boiling gelatine."

"Bah!" he mutters, rising to his feet; then goes on sardonically and impetuously: "For you I have given up gelatine, I have given up boiling! I boil no more except with love and hate, love for you, *mi amadora*—hate for *him!*" And he would get his arm about her alluring waist, but her face forbids him, as she falters with white lips:

"Hate for whom?"

"For your lover. *Santos!* don't deny it!" he breaks out. "Last night at the theatre I saw his glances on you. At Narragansett you favored him, but here I know by my mother's letters that you love him no more. His persecutions have made you pale, *doliente*, but thank the Virgin, not emaciated! Each night you pray to the devil. I have come to rescue you from him, to throw my glove in his face, to say to him: 'No more!—not another word to her, for I, Gonzalo, the Spaniard,

stand between!' I, who have eaten my heart out for you these three months while I boiled! But I have sufficient money now for two months to make protestations to you. For that time I live only at your side. Be happy, do not fear, I live only at your side!"

And he would go on in this crazy Latin fashion, for Evie's unearthly beauty has maddened the fiery Spaniard and made his blood boil stronger than he had ever made gelatine boil, did not, at this moment, Pythagoras gives several smart knocks at the door.

"Come in!" cries Evie, desperately, giving Gonzalo a look that compels him to speak only with his eyes. Then, a card being brought to her, she whispers to the Spaniard words that make him ecstatic, for she says: "Step into my boudoir," opening the hangings for him, "this gentleman will detain me only a few minutes."

"You put me off for this Guernsey?" he mutters through grinding teeth.

"Not for him! a—a gentleman on business. Don't act like a madman or I shall hate you. Be quiet and I shall—" This last is emphasized by a glance that makes his blood boil.

"You will loave me?" he whispers; his big eyes lighting with torrid passion. "Loave me, *Querida mia*?"

"Perhaps," she says, archly, for she sees that in his present mood Gonzalo de Oriva must be humored, not snubbed.

"Then I obey; my life is yours!" murmurs the Spaniard as he slips through the open portières; but as she closes the curtains she gives a little gasp of dismay, for the impetuous Oriva has caught her white hand and drawn it in to him, and even while Claude is shown into the room she feels the satin skin of her bare arm, from gleaming shoulder to ivory

wrist, covered with kisses by the ecstatic Spaniard.

"Evie, old girl, won't you give me your hand?" says Mr. Montessor in a wounded voice, who has come into the middle of the room, extending his.

"Not at present, sir!" returns Evelyn sternly, yet struggling with an insane desire to laugh; for at this moment Gonzalo is again lavishing impassioned caresses upon the imprisoned member.

Then with a quick, energetic jerk she plucks her hand from the impetuous Spaniard, closes the door of her boudoir and locks it, and, coming to the center of the room, where her ex-husband is standing, dazed with the luxury of the apartment, murmurs: "You can now have my hand, Claude, if you will be a very good boy and speak low. People may hear you."

"Yes, I see he's in there," remarks Montessor grimly. "That's why you locked the door."

"Nonsense," she says; then whispers: "Come to business. You wish my financial aid, I presume. But let me tell you I am very poor."

"*Poor!* in this apartment? *Poor!* you drive a carriage. POOR! God help me! then what am I?"

"Poor in money, and if you don't heed my words, poorer than ever after to-night," she falters appealingly; then adds hurriedly: "I have drawn a check for two hundred dollars. It is half of what I have in the bank. For that will you go away for two months and never come near me? Promise me, I beg you. *Swear it!* Perchance at the end of that time I may be rich. I have always been generous to you, am generous now even permitting you to visit me—you who have no legal right to come near me, not even the right of friendship."

But to her dismay and horror Claude, who has a stagey way of doing things, seizes the check, tears it into little bits and grinds it under his heel snarling:

"You offer me *money* when I offer you *love*!" For her ethereal beauty has maddened him also. She is more lovely, he thinks, than even when she stood by his side his blushing bride. She is more adorable now that he has lost her, than when she was his; for Claude Montessor always values most the things he has not.

So to-night in making this toilette for the ravishing of the senses of the Honorable James B. Guernsey, Evelyn has made herself too beautiful. She has entranced Gonzalo, the Spaniard, until he is as a wild man in the next room; she now enchants her ex-husband until in his frenzy this man who has come for money will give up all else—save passion.

For he breaks out at her with theatric gesture: "I deny that you have the legal right to separate yourself from me. No court shall divorce what God has joined! As to marriage I am a CATHOLIC. The State cannot sever the bonds of Mother Church! I am a CATHOLIC husband, I shall never give you up! To-day, even in my own home," he makes the magnificent apartment his domicile with a wave of the hand, "I take my stand *for ever*! Your lover shall deal with me, the outraged husband of the Roman Church. I shall demand from him not *his* money but *your* love. Then, when he has slunk out of yonder door, I shall turn to you and whisper, 'To my arms, quick!' and if you love me very much, by Jove! I may forgive you, unhappy woman!"

At this melodramatic rhapsody Evie gazes too astonished for one moment to speak, half inclined to laugh, half thinking him crazy. But crazy or not, this Spaniard and this *divorcé* will ruin her if Guernsey sees them before he gives his vote. Of this one thing she is certain.

Then with a sudden flash that wondrous intelligence, that deitate instinct that in feminine brains beats all

the logic of this world, and in supreme crises often steals victory from defeat, whispers in her mind: "Match this crazy Spaniard against thy stagey ex-husband!"

So, rising to the emergency and playing Eve for his undoing, she whispers: "Claude, you will expel from this house my lover. That, I believe, is the name by which you dignify him and insult me. Go into that room, meet him there, kick him from the house; I give you leave. For now, since I have seen you, memory comes back to me, and I——" She checks herself, holding her handkerchief to her fair face, that is writhing with suppressed laughter.

"You love me? God bless you, you darling wifey; you love me?" he mutters; and, gazing on her superb beauty, smites her with blushing rage as he adds, in caddish complacency: "Good God, Evie! I didn't think you were so catchy. It's all of ten months since you have caressed me."

And she, snarling in her heart, "You coward, to remind me!" forces herself to coquettish witchery and murmurs: "Get my admirer out *quick*, Claude."

"Won't I?" he whispers. "Out he goes, out he goes, and when I come back——"

Here his eyes look on her until she shudders: "I hope the Cuban kills him."

Unlocking the door and drawing the portières apart, Claude Montessor with the easy assurance of a husband in his own home, strides into the next apartment and confronting Gonzalo, the Spaniard, says in a "my house is my castle" voice: "May I inquire, sir, by what right you enter my flat and make yourself at home in my wife's boudoir?"

"Your *wife's* boudoir!" shrieks Gonzalo as he springs to his feet.

"Certainly, my wife, Mrs. Evelyn Montessor. I

am Mr. Montessor. Permit me," and Claude hands the astounded Spaniard his card.

Then to Evie's ears come these words, in quick succession and excited voices:

"Your wife! *Caramba!* She is a *widow!*"

"Hang me, who are you, Spaniard? I thought you were Guernsey."

"*Diablo!* I am the man who *loves* your wife!"

"Oho! then there are two of you, are there? So his nibs has a rival."

"*Santos y demonios!* I demand to see her!"

"My wife? I have sent her to her room," comes through the portières in Claude's easy and most debonair voice. Then Evie bites her lips as she hears her ex-husband sneer: "I had no idea Mrs. Montessor had been running such a pace in my absence. But now I am at home again I shall keep her in the traces, I warrant you. I came here to throw out Guernsey, but you'll do just as well. Out you go!"

"Not until I have spoken——."

"To my wife? Impossible! Stop grinding your damned teeth at me. Since fair means won't do, I'll try foul. See this fist, Spaniard?"

On this scene Evie gazes through the portières and, though she almost feels it is the crisis of her life, laughs as if her heart would break. But, over her shoulder there is sound of the heavy breathing of a man in agony, and looking up she knows it *is* the crisis of her life, for she sees the ashen face of the Honorable James B. Guernsey, who, with twitching lips is muttering hoarsely: "*His wife!* He says—you are—*HIS WIFE!*"

Then come to them, Spanish execrations and a crashing sound mingled with a cry: "*¡A cuchilla!*"

With strong arm and quick step, Guernsey pushes past her and is just in time; for Gonzalo is rising from

a knock-down blow and has death and vengeance in his eye, and a long glittering dagger in his hand. Even before Evie can speak the Western man has struck the knife from the Spaniard's hand, and with a muttered, "You murdering varmint!" has hustled the amorous Gonzalo into the hall and propelled him out of the front door, which he closes with a bang.

Returning from this, Guernsey steps up to the astounded Claude and says huskily, "You called yourself this lady's husband, sir! Have you a better right here than I?"

"Before God I am her husband."

"Ah!" falters the Senator. "I remember you now at the theater." Then he turns his stricken eyes upon the beautiful creature who stands with throbbing bosom gazing spellbound at the two men, and suddenly murmurs in horrified reproach: "By heavens, it was the sight of him that disconcerted you; that's why you dropped your playbill on the stage; that's why you said his infernal singing grated on your ears. Madame, I take my leave!"

But she is between him and the door, muttering hoarsely: "Before God that dastard lies! I am no man's wife! He has no right here in my home!"

"Then, sir," says the Senator sternly, turning to Claude, "since this lady says you are a liar, it is you who must take your leave—QUICK!"

"I? Never, you hoary-headed libertine!" mutters Claude in his strongest stage voice. But Mr. Montessor has forgotten the rapid exit of the Spaniard. Stage muscles are not the muscles of the Rockies, and Claude goes out even quicker than Gonzalo, getting two savage salutes as he leaves the front door.

Returning from this, Guernsey meets a woman who is gazing at him with a strange admiration in her eyes; for the Senator has a breezy Western way of doing

things, and he has kicked out Claude Montessor in even better shape than he did Gonzalo, the Spaniard.

To her he mutters: "Tell me all about that man who—who called you—his wife;" then adds, warningly: "And by the Eternal, let it be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so God help us both!"

Looking at him, Evie knows it must be the truth now, all of it, as regards Claude Montessor, and whispers, "I *was* his wife."

"My God!"

"I *am* his wife no more. I am his divorced widow, legally, solemnly, by the laws of New York—for *his* sins, not for *mine*. See, this will prove I tell you the living truth!" For, at her words, Guernsey has faltered and sunk down upon a chair and turned his eyes uncompromisingly from her.

In a trice she has flown to her desk and a moment later the Senator finds himself reading with glistening eyes the decree of divorce in all its legal formula that makes Evelyn Montessor a free woman.

"So the scalawag treated you badly?" he mutters.

"Listen!" answers Evie, and with every art that can bring man's sympathy she tells him of her short, unhappy married life, ending: "I supported him. With my voice I sung the bread into his mouth and he used even the money of my labor to lavish upon those who made him untrue to me."

Then Guernsey astonishes yet relieves her, for he says in businesslike voice: "Well, this paper proves you are quit of him for good;" adding grimly "Mr. Claude came here, I suppose, to levy an assessment?"

"Yes, but when he saw me, he—he forgot that he had come here for money," stammers Evie, growing embarrassed and blushing under the senator's gaze.

For that gentleman looking on her mutters: "Humph!"

No doubt. I think I understand!" and his eyes emphasize his words.

"Yes, I offered him half the money I have in the world if he would but go away and leave me. Not that he has any right to it, but I—I couldn't bear that you should imagine that I had perhaps deceived you in—in permitting you to think my husband was dead, not divorced." Then she adds appealingly, "Now you will never think well of me again!"

"Won't I?" says the Senator cheerily, looking on her radiant loveliness, for Evie is regaining her spirits and her arch witchery is returning to her, and she is playing this scene very well, giving the gentleman some tender glances that make his big heart thump.

But the Westerner goes on in businesslike voice: "That was quite a little sum of money you offered him?"

"No, only two hundred dollars!"

"What! two hundred dollars, *half* the money you have, when I sold your Gelatine out for you?"

"You thought you did," she falters. "I directed them to hold it. Every share of it is now at my brokers, and to-night I see I am going to be very poor. From your face, I see it!" For Guernsey's jaw has fallen at her words, and he is looking at the bust of Daniel Webster to avoid her pleading eyes.

"You are going to vote against the bill—I know it!" she cries. "I know it by the way you gaze at that dead statesman's face and try to think yourself a patriot. You have deceived me!"

"I? Great Scott! how?"

"Because you said you had read the statistics, and that gelatine was cheaper now to the people of the United States than ever in the history of the world. I heard you say that, I believed you would vote as you spoke—

I trusted in you, and am betrayed." Then she breaks out with woman's logic: "You have not the right to speak one way and vote another."

"Curse it, madame," he says savagely, for her appeals make him angry, "a Senator of the United States has a right to vote any way he pleases."

"Very well, go away from me—punish me, if you like, because I have a living husband," she murmurs in broken voice: then places hand upon his arm and turns eyes of such witchery upon him in their beseeching beauty that the Solon's heart beats very hard, as he fears if he destroys her fortune she may revenge herself upon his love. This weakness he struggles against, turning his head desperately away from the charm of her pathetic face toward the bust of the statesman. If he looks upon her loveliness he may succumb.

And she, mistaking his motive, jeers him for one instant, laughing: "That's right! Seek your inspiration from Daniel Webster up there, turn from my agony to his imperturbability. See if bronze is as grateful to you as living flesh and blood!" then adds brokenly: "Good night! Go to your duties, Mister Senator," and, turning away from him, passes the portières to her boudoir.

Then, from out the curtains Guernsey hears those sounds that always call manhood to the side of suffering, sobbing beauty.

"Poor little darling," he mutters. "What a cursed brute I've been!"

And in one second he is after her, and laying hand upon her white shoulder, whispers: "Going away in a huff, without a kiss for Evie's Senator? Look here, little girl, let's discuss this matter without Dan Webster coming in between us."

And before Evelyn knows just what takes place she finds herself sitting on his knee, and he stroking her

hair and saying: "Let's discuss this matter quietly, calmly—sit still, won't you?"

"How can I be calm when after to-night I shall not have a roof over my head, that one word from your lips might save for me? I wouldn't have held the stock if I hadn't heard you indicate you meant to vote for the Gelatine schedule. Now I—" she is very desperate here, she will carry her point—"shall go away from Washington, for I cannot afford to live in this luxury. I must earn my bread."

"How?"

"By going on the stage!"

"The—the opera-bouffe stage?" he falters.

"Yes, the opera-bouffe stage! I can make my living at that; I have had offers; you have heard me sing."

"What! go on like that prima donna I saw last night; perchance, good gosh, in tights? mutters the statesman, horrified; "the eyes of a thousand men looking at your beauty. By Heavens! I will not permit it."

"How can you prevent it?"

"How? By voting so you won't hate me for impoverishing you." Then his eyes light up with desperate passion, for the beauty of the exquisite creature whose fair form rests against his, whose white arm is even now around his neck, whose sapphire eyes are gazing into his, maddens him, and he mutters hoarsely: "If I say 'aye,' in the Senate Chamber to-night, will you say 'aye,' to the question I ask of you when I return from it?"

"Yes!" she whispers, feeling that she has now indeed burnt ships and bridges behind her.

"Then swear to it!" he continues solemnly. "If I say 'aye' to the gelatine duties, that you say 'aye' to what I ask you?"

"I swear it!" she whispers desperately, and her eyes blaze in triumph for she knows she has delivered "the goods."

But even as she speaks, she shudders at the price she is paying for this man's vote. But she won't think of that—thought means repentance; she goes on with excited rapidity: "Quick! The bill will be coming up for vote; do not let it lose yours by your absence. You keep *your* word, I will keep *mine*! By this kiss Jim, I WILL KEEP MINE!"

What man could resist such clinging loveliness, her heart beating against his, her witching voice pleading to his ear, her glorious eyes burning up his soul? Not a great big Westerner, with his best girl's head upon his breast.

"It's a bargain, Evie!" he mutters, "By this kiss it's a bargain!"

Then going out from her he communes with himself even as he drives down Connecticut Avenue *en route* for the Capitol: "Hang me if I'll be able to look people in the face after this vote," but a moment after thinks complacently: Yes, I will! The gelatine duties are *all right*. Gelatine is cheaper than ever. It's a good thing for the country! To-night I and a majority of the Senate will say so—and who the dickens will dare to contradict us? Besides, I love her too well to lose her for half a cent a pound on imported gelatine."

And as Doc Guernsey reasons so do many other of his brother lawmakers of the nation this night, upon which the vote on the Gelatine schedule comes up before the Senate of the United States.

When it is a question of a great monopoly or the people, who generally gets the worst of it in the halls of legislation?

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BATTLE FOR THE MAN.

And Evie in her hour of victory—is she happy?

For one moment, as Guernsey's footsteps die away, she is—and whispers with beaming eyes and glowing cheeks: "I've won! I've *won*! I've WON! Gelatine will come flying up. I am rich! *rich*! RICH!" And claps her hands and dances with fairy feet in blithesome glee.

Then suddenly over her arms, face, neck, and bosom comes in one mighty carmine wave an awful burning, blazing blush; and she falters: "Merciful God! what have I paid for it? If he says 'aye' to-night in the Senate Chamber then I say 'aye' to him afterward in this room. My Heaven! what will he ask me? I know, *I know*!" and she throws herself down, careless of crushing satins and tearing laces, and grovels on an ottoman in her boudoir.

"Yes, that's what he's going to ask me. I know! He's the true son of his father!" she mutters with set teeth. "He has my promise! What do such men always demand from women? Throw away that which you prize the most, they cry; cast down your virtue if you want our aid!"

Then growing calmer she sneers at herself: "Could I not have foreseen it? Was it not in my mind when I laughed months ago and said I must have *my* Senator? Did not that also mean my Senator would have *me*? Why should he think better of me than I do of myself? He knows me now, a *divorcée*, not a widow! Within this very room he has seen the man who once had right to me." Then she laughs sarca

tically, "Shall Jim Guernsey win his battle because I am fool enough to keep a bargain that is wrong to keep? Pooh! I'll toss his father's infamy in his face!" next starts up and mutters fiercely: "It is the descended feud of the Corsican! His father robbed me of happiness and my sister! Now I rob the son of his career and raise my own fortunes upon his downfall. If I make public his telegram about Gelatine stock who will believe him, even if he make oath! I have the right to hate him. He must be bad, then why is he good to me? He's doubly bad. Scoundrel and hypocrite *both*! Thank God, I hate him! *hate him*! HATE HIM! For if I loved him——" Here her face grows dazed with a new and incanny terror, and she sobs out: "Oh, God, not that! No, no! That would be *too* horrible!" but muses, strangely: "How grand he was when he threw the Spaniard across the hall! How big Jim looked when he seized puny Claude and kicked him—yes, I saw him kick him—out of the front door! Sometimes he seems to be noble. *Noble*? When he sells his vote for my kisses, and yet—— Oh, Heaven! how sweet they are! No, no! Nonsense! When I think of his father, of course I hate him, *hate him*, HATE HIM! James Guernsey shall kiss me no more, for if he did—— Oh, powers of mercy! *if he did!*" And some weird and mighty terror seems to dominate her now.

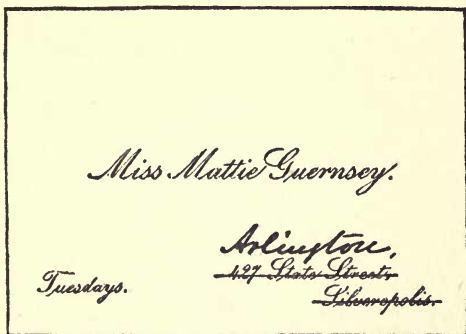
So, rending herself with conflicting passions, Evie, made beautiful by anguish, lies tossing on the ottoman.

She has half succeeded in forcing herself to calmness when there comes to her ears the jingle of her door-bell and she springs up, dismay upon her face, her hand clutching her beating heart, and murmurs: "The vote is over. Oh, my soul! Jim Guernsey has come to claim his promise, to get his price!"

But Pythagoras, her black page, brings in to her on a silver-salver a card. Glancing at the name, uncertainty flies over her face, and she says faintly: "Not at home!"

The next instant determination takes the place of doubt. She calls the boy back to her and says sternly: "Show the lady into the parlor and tell her I will see her in a moment!"

And Evie's face grows set as she wonders: "Why is she here? Why does she come to me?" For this is what she looks upon:



"Is it because"—a light of joy comes in her eyes—"is it because Jim asked her to come? Is he going to crush me with goodness?" To this question she answers, wildly, "No! no! He must be a villain, he *shall* be a villain. I *want* him to be a villain! That's the only thing that will make me feel that I am not altogether despicable. If he asks me to be his mistress I shall have the right to dispise him, and yet—Heaven help me! I have promised whatever the villain asks. That's what he must be, a villain! Sending his sister to greet the woman he is going to make his mistress.

That's the way they do it, asking their wives or sisters to meet the ladies of their love, to keep them immaculate before the public. That's the *senatorial* way! How I despise him! But if he can play the hypocrite, so can I!" Then she jeers: "I will see Miss Gawk from the West."

So, with these very pleasant sentiments in her mind, Evelyn Montessor, a supercilious disdain on her delicate features, steps into her parlor to meet surprise.

She has had a few of them this evening, but this, to use a Western expression, "takes the chips."

A bright, dashing, resolute girl rises to meet her, an elegance in her manner that is not destroyed by the direct frankness of her hazel eyes that beam direct and strong and look upon Mrs. Montessor—perchance not too kindly.

Were the young lady not holding herself in icy control she would be a picture of gracious girlhood. Her eyes are winning, the pose of her body is unaffected; every movement of her lithe limbs beneath the tightly-fitting, tailor-made gown of soft blue, that has even now the dust of hasty journey upon it, is full of graceful activity, mingled with frontier decision. For Mattie Guernsey is as breezy as the Rocky Mountain air that has blown her brown curls about, ever since she was a little girl; and though she has the cultivation of education and travel, beneath it is the strength of character that comes from self-dependence, she having ridden over the prairies when Indians were dangerous, and having conquered her own mustangs and made them her servants. Her frank glance now is determined and—not friendly.

"You have come——?" murmurs Mrs. Montessor suggestively.

"On account of my brother," remarks the girl.

"He—he asked you to call? That is very kind," returns Evelyn extending her hand.

This the young lady does not take, but says: "No, he did not ask me to call. But still I am here on his account." Then she suddenly falters, "You—you are the lady of the portrait. He learnt to love your face before he saw you. And I—I induced him to buy it because—because I was a fool," and Mattie Guernsey's brown eyes have anguish in them.

"I—I don't understand you. You have seen your brother?" asks Mrs. Montessor, scarce understanding the other's emotion.

"Not for a month. I only arrived in Washington this evening, scarce half an hour ago. Jim is at the Capitol; the Senate is in session to-night," answers the girl fighting herself to coldness and growing once more haughty.

"Yes, I know."

"Therefore, you will pardon my Western bluntness by asking you to read this newspaper," continues Mattie Guernsey, and searches in her reticule.

All the time Evie's eyes have been devouring the girl, her graces, her beauties, from her chestnut hair and hazel eyes to her exquisite but agile figure, and once or twice as Mattie has made some quick gesture, Evelyn has passed her hand over her forehead as if trying to brush away something that came into her mind.

"This paper—oblige me by reading it, madame," says the young lady in austere coldness, offering her a Western journal.

"Certainly," replies Mrs. Montessor, "though your manner is curious. Please be seated." She waves her hand to a chair.

"I prefer to remain standing, madame. *Read it!*"

The words are uttered in a tone that Evie is unaccustomed to.

"Oh, certainly, remain standing if you prefer it. I suppose that must be Western manners. But I prefer my comfort," sneers Mrs. Montessor, sinking languidly into the softest seat she can find, and glancing carelessly at the *Silveropolis Buzzard*.

The article that meets her eye makes her start. It is a long one which displays in its head-lines, in biggest type, well leaded, the following pleasant announcements: IN THE TOILS OF THE SIREN—DOC GUERNSEY'S FALL FROM GRACE—CAPTURED BY A WIDOW'S ALLUREMENTS—THE GELATINE TRUST COULD NOT PHASE DOC GUERNSEY, BUT THE FASCINATING EVIE WAS TOO MUCH FOR HIS NIBS.

This homily Evelyn reads, line by line, for all of its two columns. It suggests that Guernsey, Populoso's favorite son and trusted senator, has fallen victim in Washington to the allurements of a woman of unknown antecedents, but who is undoubtedly an agent of the gigantic monopoly that is engaged at present in corrupting the Senate; that lust has conquered the young political giant from the West; and it hints in no very equivocal terms at the price the beautiful widow has paid for Guernsey's vote.

It is as nasty an article as was ever printed in an American newspaper. Each line an insinuation, a slur, or a lie; every sentence of it stinging Evie more sharply than if it were a whip lashing her delicate shoulders.

Even as she reads she knows from whose pen this must have come, and thinks: "If I had Algeria Tolstock in my grasp!" Then it suddenly flies through her: "He must not see it until his vote is given."

So, putting the paper coolly in her pocket, Evelyn remarks nonchalantly, though her lips quiver: "I have read the flattering article you have been so kind as to bring me. Do you wish to supplement it by any

remarks of your own, Miss Guernsey? I don't think it will be pleasant reading for your brother."

"It rests with you whether my brother ever sees this attack or not," returns the young lady coldly.

"With me?" When it has been published by the thousands!"

"Have you seen any telegraphic comments on it from Silveropolis?" queries the girl suddenly and anxiously.

"No!"

"Thank God! Then look! The date of that paper is three days ago. Would not such a scandal as this have been telegraphed in full to the Washington papers, had this journal ever reached the public eye?"

"Undoubtedly!" says Evelyn, surprise upon her face.

"Very well, then," cries the frontier girl in triumph, "you hold in your hand, madame, the only copy extant of it!—FOR I HAVE SUPPRESSED THAT PAPER!"

"You?"

"Yes, I!"

"How?"

"How? By crushing the *Silveropolis Buzzard*! Listen to me, it may be a lesson to you," says the girl, a menace in her voice. "Four days ago Mr. Barton Jordan, my brother's partner, my brother's friend, my —" she checks herself here, but with blushing cheeks goes resolutely on: "came to me and told me that that blackmailing sheet would the next morning blazon to the people of my State the news of my brother's shame. He did not tell me all its vile insinuations. He couldn't do that. No man could tell a young girl all of that article, even though she was his—" Miss Guernsey checks herself again, then utters meaningly: "But I understood. I said: 'Bart, I will smash those forms and destroy that paper before the article is printed. Tell me the best way to do it.' And he

answered, 'I have struck it! The sheriff holds a judgment belonging to Joe Martin over the *Buzzard*.' Then I cried, 'We will buy the judgment and foreclose on the paper! Joe Martin will sell quick enough. To-night we will seize the *Silveropolis Buzzard*!' Bart loves my brother as well as I. He did it. Before a single paper of its morning edition was issued we had possession of the presses, type, and fixtures. I smashed those forms myself. With my own hands I destroyed every printed scandal but this one, that I brought here to show my brother what was going to be said about him if he did not live the life of a self-respecting man and honest legislator. With that paper in my pocket I came here, two days and nights by railroad, to snatch him from destruction and—and you! Jim was engaged at the Senate. Then it suddenly occurred to me—for my brother rather thinks that a man should do what he pleases in this world—that Jim might be more difficult to control than you. So I said, 'I will go to her, I WILL SUPPRESS THE WOMAN!'"

"You are evidently laboring under a mistake as to the kind of woman you have come to suppress," replies Mrs. Montessor sarcastically, for the blood has risen in her face as she has listened to her arraignment, and the two confront each other to fight it out.

"I am laboring under no mistake. Your name is mentioned in that article. I said, 'The woman may have some good in her; then she will give him up to me, and let our honest, noble Jim be once more his own true self.' Believe me, I appreciate his temptation when I look upon you. Spare this man that we love out West, take your beauty from out his eyes, release him from your spell!"

"You are complimentary," sneers Evelyn; then suddenly she cries in angry tone: "Why do you take such an interest in Jim Guernsey?"

"Because I love him!" answers the girl proudly.

"Love him—*you*?" And for one moment Evie looks as if she would spring toward her, for a new passion is in her soul, one that frightens her and horrifies her.

"Jealous of Doc Guernsey! Jealous! My Heaven! that means love; that means despair!" Whatever she does now she does not care. Whichever way the battle goes, *she loses*! If she destroys this man's career she loves him; if she turns her back on him, it will be with a breaking heart. Checking her hand, she smites the girl with her tongue, muttering: "You love him! Not as a sister, eh, but as a woman?"

"Horrible!" shudders Mattie. "He is my brother!"

"Pooh! he has no blood of yours in his veins. You love him as a woman!"

"No, no; only as the best, the kindest friend, who has dandled me on his knee when I was a child, who has risked his life to save mine half a dozen times in the perils of the West. I love him, yes, I am proud of it, but as a brother!"

"As a woman, you love!"

"That is untrue!" answers the girl, sternly. "My love as a woman is for another man."

"Aha! Barton Jordan, who accompanied you to Washington?"

"Yes. Why not?" I am his promised wife, though Bart begged me not to come here to sully myself by seeing you."

"No further insult! You have said sufficient to make me hate you, to make me crush you," mutters Evie, with flashing eyes.

"Crush me? You don't know me," remarks Miss Guernsey, the calm look of the Western fighter coming in her eyes. Then she goes on in that quiet voice whose tone oftentimes means death: "Listen to my ultimatum, madame. You leave Washington to-night,

and never speak to my brother in this life again!"

"And—if—not?"

"If not, I shall remain here till he returns to you. Then I shall tell him what I think of you, and what I think of him! Besides, *I will pay you money.*"

At this last insult Mrs. Montessor's eyes flash banefully. She cries: "That proves you didn't know me when you came here, but you shall go away better informed." And her glance growing cold, cruel, and pitiless, she continues: "Listen to *my* ultimatum! *You* leave Washington within the hour, and take your *fiancé* with you, my meddling chit. You say no word to your brother concerning this interview, or of this paper I have in my pocket."

"And if not?" returns the girl, coldly, her eyes answering the other's.

"If not, I shall tell Jim Guernsey that you have come here to insult me."

"I've thought of that," answers Mattie, determinedly. "Jim can't be angry with me for doing my duty."

"That's not all I shall tell him."

"No?"

"I shall tell him that Mr. Barton Jordan has come to Washington to put his hand between Mr. Guernsey and myself. That Mr. Barton Jordan doesn't think the Senator from Populoso is able 'to run his own wagon'—that's the way you put it out West, I believe. That Mr. Barton Jordan has brought you here to separate us. That Mr. Barton Jordan has sent you here to my house to insult me shamefully, cruelly, unprovokedly, and with malice aforethought."

"No, no, that is not true!—that was my own idea!"

"Won't your brother believe it is true? Do you wish Mr. Barton Jordan and Mr. James Guernsey to meet after that? They are both Western men, I be-

lieve, and quick at the trigger," jeers Evie in unholy glee, laughing the laugh of despair.

To this the girl cries out: "My Heaven! Not that! Whether they fought or not, whether they killed each other or no, they would never be friends again, my brother and the man I love. Don't do that! Go from here, I beg of you. Leave Washington! You have done enough to disgrace us all!" Then she again makes Evelyn shudder, for she goes on: "You want money. That's what every woman of your class wants. I have a private fortune of my own, left me by the noble father of the man you would ruin. I will sacrifice it all to save poor Jim from your clutches. It is more than you can get from the corporation for which you work, it will give you enough to be rich. Far from here, in Europe, you may play the princess and beguile other men by your accursed beauty."

But the other interrupts her in snarling voice: "The noble father of Jim Guernsey! You call him that—he who stole my birthright from me when I was a helpless child? Overhand Guernsey, who made me what I am!"

"Yes, Overhand Guernsey!" cries Mattie. "He who gave me my birthright and made me what I am. Look at me! Behold me!"

And Evelyn, gazing, sees the acme of beautiful, fresh girlhood glaring at her. "You see me?" says the girl. "Do I seem the child of a pauper? Do I look as if when an infant I had been beaten, starved? I can remember, though it was long ago, how, in the horror of an asylum, where they treated children like brutes, where they starved them until my poor sister sold the Bible to give me bread——"

"*Sold the Bible to give you bread!*" This is a scream of despair, astonishment, rapture

"Yes," answers Mattie, "and from that horror

the father of this man whom you would ruin came to me and took me in his arms and carried me away from the clutches of a fiend called Mawley——”

“Mawley!” gasps Evelyn. “*Mawley!*” then shrieks: “Mathilde! Mathilde!”

“Mathilde! My name when I was French!” stammers the girl astounded. “Yes, I can just remember—the name my sister called me.”

But she changes her tone here, for a pair of snowy arms are round her neck and with the strength of loathing Mattie tears off the grasping hands and smites the woman who would caress her, with these awful words: “You vile thing! How dare you pollute me with your touch?”

“Pollute you! Mathilde, I am your sister! It was I who sold the Bible to keep you from starving. Don’t you remember? Don’t you remember Evie, *Mignonnette?*”

And the other looking at her, as if dazed, screams: “*Mignonnette!* my pet name, my French name that my sister called me when we were happy in Paris.” Then opening her arms, whispers, *Sœur Chérie!*”

And suddenly the white arms are round her once again with mighty clasp, and this time they remain, and Mattie Guernsey murmurs: “My sister!”

But these words come faintly to Evie’s ears, and the two almost faint and sink down together as their lips meet in sisters’ kiss for the first time since Mawley’s cruel hands had parted them.

And they are as two crazy girls, each having found what she had been seeking for in all the world; and they lie panting, breast to breast, lavishing on each other the wild caresses of an astounded joy.

Then they get to telling childish stories to each other, saying: “Do you remember that?” And laugh-

ing: "This is how you used to tickle me—you naughty one," and Evie kisses a little mole on Mattie's neck, prattling: "*Mignonnette*, I should have known you by this; you remember—sister's love spot!" and kisses it again.

Then strange power of love, Mattie is sobbing on her sister's heart and begging her to forgive her and murmuring: "I must have been mad, wild, to have doubted your noble eyes. Your looks were the same when you faced my lies as when you shielded me from cruel Mawley." And she rises up and strides about in righteous indignation, crying: "Ah, if I had the Editor here! That vile paper has slandered you, *Sœur Cherie*—as well as him."

But this is not so comforting as it should be to Evie, who sighs: "The world doesn't love me as you do, *Mignonnette*."

"Aye, that it doesn't," cries Mattie. "But now Jim must know I have found my sister and be happy, too. And if he loves you—oh! if Jim loves you, fancy what that will mean for me—what joy, what happiness!"

And the girl claps her hands and laughs, the merry ripples in her young voice beating a requiem on her sister's heart.

"Yes, find him! *Quick*, to your hotel! He will doubtless call on you the moment he knows you are here," cries Evie half crazy at the thoughts that run through her reeling brain. "Don't stay here, find Jim!"

And, though it is difficult, she puts her sister away with feverish impatience, and gets her to the door—for she must see Jim Guernsey first, and she knows too well where he will come the moment he leaves the Senate.

But, even at the entrance, Mattie turns, and, kiss-

ing her again, gives Evelyn an awful stab. She murmurs, with radiant eyes: "To-morrow morning early shall I come up here and kiss you, or will you come down to the Arlington and kiss me?" Then, looking into the lovely face that gazes upon and devours her own, she adds: "I believe Jim loves you,—but not the scandal, not the lies, dear sister!"

So she goes away, leaving Evie alone in horrid reverie, for she is muttering to herself: "Jim Guernsey's father was a *good* man. He has made my sister happy, pure, and noble; he has given her education and a fortune. It must have been a dream that he robbed me of my birthright. Now I have no right to break my oath to the son."

Then she starts, turns pale, and trembles, for a newsboy outside is crying, in the clear night air, these awful words, that smite her: "*Extree—extra! The gelatine schedule passed by the Senate by a majority of ONE!*"

And she cries out: "One! That was my vote in the United States Senate, and what have I paid for it! My God! I have won the game, I have delivered 'the goods'!" next shudders: "He will be here for his price," and laughs a hideous laugh. "How Mathilde will love me, the mistress of the man she calls her brother!"

Then, an indomitable resolution coming over her, she mutters: "I will tell him! Then if he dares to ask, I'll drive his infamy down his throat!" next, in a plaintive way, falters: "He will despise me, breaking my oath, refusing the bargain I have made."

And just here a new but despairing light comes into her tortured eyes, and she cries, wringing her hands in hapless misery: "Oh Jim—my Jim—now I *know!* It was love—LOVE!—LOVE! that cried out in my heart—not hate! not HATE!"

CHAPTER XX.

"YOU CAN'T RUIN A UNITED STATES SENATOR."

THEN to this woman waiting for this man she knows she loves and fears the more because she loves him, there comes a step up the stairs—*his* step!

She knows now that she has listened for it day by day—that's why she recognizes it, she loves it!

He is coming for his price and she has sworn to pay it! He has voted "aye" in the Senate, that she may vote "aye" here in this room to-night!

The front door is opening! convulsively she rises from the sofa on which she has been sitting and makes a step as if to drive him away before he can plead with her and kiss her.

But even as he draws aside the portières of her parlor, Jim Guernsey's face appalls her. It is not that of the man who had left her; it has a hangdog, sneaky look about the eyes. The honest gleam of passion, hungering passion, has left it. This creature who is coming in to her looks as if he were a sneak and ashamed of it.

Instead of confronting him, she retreats from him.

This is but for an instant! Even as he gazes at her, Jim Guernsey's face blazes up, devouring the beauty of this creature of wild eyes and hunted-deer expression that he has bargained for and bought!

So they gaze at each other like two criminals, neither daring to look the other in the eye.

Then she cries hoarsely: "Keep away!" for the Senator's mien affrights her.

At times his eyes seem to light up with longing passion and absorb her, then seek the floor. Though his

lips quiver they give forth no sound. Is the question he is going to ask her so base a one that even this free and easy Western man—who is at best no more refined than his fellows of politics or the clubs—cannot phrase it?

As this idea dashes through Evie's brain, over her beautiful face, neck, and arms, flies that torturing blush of modesty about to be assailed, the one that has come to her so often this night. To her pale, mobile features it adds the loveliness of diffidence, the delicate charm of rosebud cheeks, shy eyes, and exquisite retreating pose. Her shoulders that had been gleaming white marble now shine like pink corals.

Upon this loveliness Jim Guernsey gazes longingly, passionately, then his eyes sink before Evie's once more in a shamefaced way, and he mutters, huskily: "The gelatine schedule has passed the Senate by one."

"Y-e-s, I know, the extras told me that," she sighs, and her cheeks glow with deeper red; she lays one little hand upon her heart as if to stay its fluttering, and with the other supports herself against an ornamental table as if his news had struck her down, for Doc Guernsey, with the air of a man who has come to the Rubicon and is bound to pass it, closes the door behind him with a bang, and takes a step toward her.

From him she shrinks, strange diffidence in her manner, a delicious bashfulness in her attitude.

Apprehension is upon her. Before she loved him she did not fear him; now, my heaven!—*why does he fear her too?*

A nervous laugh, that is half mocking, half hysterical, ripples her pale lips. Mentally she sneers: "The Sultan is not trembling before his purchased odalisque. Lovelace is abashed in the presence of Pamela."

Even as these thoughts fly through her Guernsey mutters: "By thunder! you shrink from me, Evie! You—you don't come here to kiss me for my vote?"

"No, Jim," she murmurs, "I—I can't do that."

"That's about what I guessed it would be," he says moodily, and sinks into a chair, tossing his hat upon the table. "That's what I feared when I voted 'No' in the United States Senate to-night. That's why I can't look you in the face, I've—I've busted my word to you, Evie!"

"You voted '*No!*'" she gasps, coming to him.

"Yes!"

"Thank God!" And two fairy lips are pressed upon his.

To her he falters: "Great gosh! you're glad I went back on my promise to you?"

"Yes, Jim," she cries, a glorious joy in her face, "because now I can go back on my word to you. I can say 'no' to your question."

But a desperate, almost despairing man rises up to her, and, taking her fair wrist in his grasp, turns her to him and says: "Not by the torture stake! You shan't say no!"

"Why not?" and her eyes beam on him defiantly as she laughs: "The—the bill hasn't passed."

"Oh, yes it has! Some other fellows haven't as big a conscience as I have," he mutters. "But Evie!" Here the dominant power of the man breaks forth and carries her away with him as he goes on in impetuous voice: "Though I got up to say 'aye' to the vote, I couldn't, darn me, I just couldn't! That infernal bust of Daniel Webster up there," he points to the bronze "got to looking at me in the Senate Chamber, and I, despite my word to you, shouted '*no!*' so loud it most shook the Senate Chamber. The galleries applauded me but all I thought was: 'Even if this does beggar my darling perhaps she'll forgive me for it. For though I've broken my promise to you and voted 'no,' by the Eternal you shan't vote 'no' to the question I

ask you to-night. Forgive me, pity me!—I—I said, even if Evie does lose her money what does it matter? I have enough for both! My wife——!”

“Your *wife*! Jim?” This is half shriek, half sob, from the beautiful creature who trembles in his grasp.

“Yes, my *WIFE*! She’ll be rich, she’ll have all I have on earth, even my love. That’s the question I meant to ask you to-night. And by heaven, you shan’t say ‘no’ because that cursed bust of Daniel Webster has made me do my duty as a man and a senator.”

Then, forgetful of gauze and laces and furbelows, Doc Guernsey crushes to his big heart the woman who in her soul had thought him base enough to love her but to make her barter her honor for his.

But with a smothered, self-reproaching “Jim! why d-d-didn’t you speak before?” there is a fainting woman on the big breast of the Senator from Populoso. Over her he bends and mutters: “Wake up! wake up, sis! hear me speak *now*! If it hadn’t been for the infernal anonymous letters I would have SHOUTED long ago. Evie! it’s your big Jim talking to you. Evie! it’s the fellow who voted as you didn’t want him to that’s talking to you. Evie!”

But he ceases speech and goes to kissing, for the eyes have opened—the beaming eyes of the woman he loves: and she is whispering to him; “Jim, forgive me! I thought—oh, Jim! What did I think?”

“Not as bad as you ought to, not as good as I’ll be to you, please God,” mutters the Senator, and takes his prey in his arms as if she belonged to him—even though he has voted against the Gelatine Trust.

* * * * *

One morning about a week after this, the Waldorf is in its Monday glory; the audience from one of Mr. Bagby’s concerts, in which the beauty and fashion of New York have just been listening to the great songbirds,

tenors, and musical virtuosos of this world, is passing out of the ballroom, some of them going to their carriages, others strolling through the magnificent apartments of the first floor *en route* for the dining-room, where the usual numerous lunch parties that follow these affairs, take place.

Among this crowd of beautiful women, in which gentlemen are conspicuous because they are so few, is Mr. Steinbergh. The Colossus of the stock market has stolen time from his business affairs, now that the great Gelatine fight is over and the Trust is safe, to devote a little of his leisure to art. A songbird, in whom he takes paternal interest and whose artistic fortunes he favors, has been giving out her notes at great price at the concert. Mr. Steinbergh has sauntered in to help her by his presence and applause.

He looks carelessly at the beauties who are stepping into their magnificent equipages at the door and, after lunching in the restaurant with one or two gentlemen and ladies of his acquaintance, is about calling his carriage to drive down town. Passing the Moorish room he chances to carelessly glance into that arabesque apartment, gives a little start and thinks: "By George, here's another girl-bride. This hotel seems alive with 'em. At a distance she is very pretty. I'll take a nearer inspection," and strolls into the parlor of Turkey-red effects to receive surprise.

A beautiful woman at his approach rises, her eyes lighting up with cordial greeting as she murmurs: "Dear Mr. Steinbergh, I was just sitting down to write to you, to ask you to drop in and see us;" then she smiles, and whispers, archly, "You've forgiven me, I hope, for not delivering '*the goods*'?"

"Most assuredly," remarks the financier, "especially as Mr. Guernsey's little speech upon statistics really won the fight for us. Two or three gentlemen,

who were on the fence, thought the Senator from Populoso was upon our side of it, and promptly stepped over and voted in the right way. Now, I suppose you'd like my advice with regard to your stock?"

"Very much," says Evie affably and happily, because Mr. Steinbergh had always been kind to her and she has feared reproach from him where she now receives, in his easy way, the thanks this gentleman can always give so graciously.

"Very well," he whispers, "keep your stock."

"Why, it's already gone up twenty points," she says eagerly.

"Yes, it will go up *more!* Its dividends will pay you. Keep it. The bears in Wall Street may assail it, but we're not afraid of bears. They are our meat. The only thing the Gelatine Trust trembles at is Congress."

Then his tranquil eyes grow deep as he suggests: "You wished to see me on business—was this the whole of it?"

"No," she replies, "more important business than even the question I have asked you. You have a telegram in your possession signed 'James B. Guernsey' in regard to five thousand shares of Gelatine stock?"

"Yes," he answers, his eyes growing cunning.

"Send it to me by special messenger."

"Ah! you wish to hold it over the Senator—you imagine you can punish him for not voting your way? you wish——"

"I did wish," she says impulsively——

"Not to ruin him?" he asks almost jeeringly, then continues, a curious twinkle in his eye: "Permit me to tell you a few little facts about the United States Senate, and one of them is this: Nothing save the failure of reelection ever ruins a United States Senator!"

"No?" she says, astounded. "Not even if it were proved——"

"Nothing ruins a United States Senator! In proof of which," remarks Mr. Steinbergh, "permit me to offer you this newspaper homily."

And he produces from his pocketbook that celebrated article in the New York *Herald* of Sunday, March tenth, 1895, which has these extraordinary headlines: "HOW CONGRESS DIED!—SIGHTS AND SCENES OF DISGUSTING REVELRY AMID THE MAKERS OF OUR NATION'S LAWS!—A PROLONGED SATURNALIA!—AND PANDEMONIUM PRESIDED!—COMMITTEE ROOMS ARE MADE BARS AND DISREPUTABLE PERSONS JOIN WITH CONGRESSMEN!"

"Read that," he jeers, "and you'll think neither woman nor the Devil can ruin a United States Senator." Then he laughs with good-natured sneer: "And so my pretty little lady, you intended to ruin poor Jim Guernsey?"

"I've—I've done worse than that!" returns Evie, laughing.

"Worse?"

"Yes," she says impulsively, "I've—I'VE MARRIED HIM!"

"Married him?" This is a gasp of astonishment from Steinbergh who has received one of the very few verbal knock-downs of his career.

"Yes, I am now the Honorable Mrs. James B. Guernsey, of Populoso. He is *my* Senator now. We were married very early this morning and are just arrived from Washington. Jim thought he would fly from the reporters but he didn't. They've got him in the café now. You can read all about it in the evening papers." Then she blushes sweetly and murmurs reproachfully: "Don't I—I look like a bride?"

"Indeed you do," he whispers, his eyes emphasizing

his admiration; for Evie has thrown away all suggestion of widowhood with the new vows that have passed her lips. There is no hint of *second* honeymoon in her nuptial toilette. She looks as much the bride as any maiden in orange blossoms, white veil, and blushes.

And, bending over her fair hand, he thinks: "She is even a more brilliant woman than I thought her. I imagined she only wanted his vote. Egad! she has captured *all* his votes!" Then he adds very earnestly: "Remember what I told you about the Gelatine stock. Keep it as you would a household god."

Here she astounds him, for she whispers: "No, I shall sell it as a household devil! It would be a standing bribe to me. Jim's got five years more. I have already ordered it sold. With the hundred thousand dollars profit I'm going to endow the Home for Motherless Children founded in Silveropolis by Jim's noble father. After this my husband votes for his honor—which shall be my glory. For you know," here she stammers and grows red with bride's blushes, and taps with her parasol her pretty foot that is peeping from beneath her satin skirts, "I—I love Jim!"

"I see you do," falters the financier. Then he says in broken voice: "Jim Guernsey's the luckiest man upon this earth!"

"Then stop and congratulate him," she suggests, eagerly. "Congratulate us *both*, dear Mr. Steinbergh. Come up and have dinner with us and see how happy we are. You've always been very good to me."

"Yes, we're—we're old friends," falters the man of Wall Street. "But I—I won't intrude upon the first honeymoon dinner."

Once more bending over her fair hand, he kisses it sadly and goes away; for Steinbergh, great as he is at finance, and potent as he is among the bankers, brokers, and money-changers of this world, has that

not uncommon feebleness of manhood. He always values most the woman he has lost.

But notwithstanding the financier's regrets, and three or four long sighs given in the course of a business day, he finds time to send to the Honorable Mr. and Mrs. James B. Guernsey one of the handsomest wedding presents that has ever been received in New York, and that means a good deal.

For Mr. Steinbergh, as he has driven down to Wall Street, has communed to himself in this way: "God bless her, I'm glad I gave dear little Evie a push along in life. And now dear little Evie will give the Honorable Jim *several* pushes in his career. There's no telling what such a woman may do. Great discounts! she may some day make '*Her* Senator' into 'OUR PRESIDENT!'"

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